



Thursday March 12 1998

Abu Dhabi 0.850	Greenland 0.500	Oman 0.150
Albania 0.250	Hong Kong 0.250	Poland 2.600
Andorra 0.100	Hungary 0.250	Portugal 2.600
Austria 0.250	Ireland 0.250	Qatar 0.650
Bahrain 0.250	Italy 1.350	Romania 0.250
Bulgaria 0.250	Jordan 0.250	Saudi Arabia 0.250
Canada 0.250	Kazakhstan 0.250	Slovakia 0.250
Croatia 0.250	Korea 0.250	Slovenia 0.250
Cyprus 0.250	Latvia 0.250	Spain 0.250
Czech Republic 0.250	Lithuania 0.250	Sweden 0.250
Denmark 0.250	Malta 0.250	Switzerland 0.250
Egypt 0.250	Mexico 0.250	Thailand 0.250
France 0.250	Morocco 0.250	Turkey 0.250
Germany 0.250	Netherlands 0.250	Ukraine 0.250
Greece 0.250	Norway 0.250	USA 0.250

What now for Richard Rogers' project?

Waving the South Bank goodbye

G2 with European weather



Sarah Gracie bares all

Why your body language can let you down at work

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Computing and technology

How to make your computer disappear

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Well-off schools fail to deliver

John Carvel
Education Editor

COMPLACENT schools in some of the most prosperous areas of England are letting down a generation of pupils by failing to deliver the quality of state education available in better organised parts of the country. Schools in affluent areas often provide poorer value than the inner-city establishments most commonly criticised for under-achievement. The Audit Commission warns today in its first full report on the performance of education authorities.

"As much public money is wasted by unambitious councils failing to achieve their potential as by councils criticised for not delivering a decent service," said Paul Vevers, the commission's director of audit support.

More children were let down by the many complacent authorities accepting average results than by the few problem authorities at the bottom of the performance tables, he said.

The commission found huge variations in GCSE results within groups of councils with similar levels of deprivation or affluence. These could not be explained by the size of local education budgets, suggesting that schools in successful areas were simply better at doing the job.

"It is not inevitable that absolute levels of achievement will be lower in more deprived areas," the commis-

sion said. Last year GCSE results in Lincolnshire — one of the 15 most prosperous authorities — were much the same as in the London borough of Camden, one of the 15 poorest authorities. Camden did twice as well as the London borough of Southwark, but spent less per secondary school pupil.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, said: "It is remarkable to find that some of the least deprived areas in the country are producing GCSE results comparable to the most deprived. This shows poverty is no excuse for poor standards, and that some better-off areas are guilty of coasting."

In a statement released by the Labour Party because it was too political for the Whitehall Information Machine, he drew attention to the commission's finding that spending on classroom services fell by \$44 per pupil in primary schools and \$110 per pupil in secondary schools between 1993/4 and 1996/7.

"This shows how the Conservatives' neglect of school standards as well as their cuts to school spending seriously damaged the education prospects of our nation's children," Mr Blunkett said. The party drew attention to remarks by the former Tory minister Steve Norris that his party should be "ashamed" of its "failure to significantly improve the level of public education".

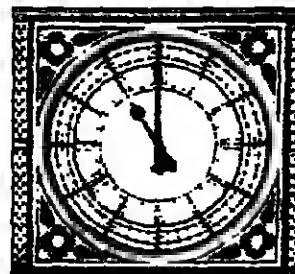
The report underlined Tony Blair's warning last week that the performance of local government is too variable. In a pamphlet for the Institute for

McQueen of the catwalk



A model displays a fur-like collar and metallic helmet during the showing in Paris of Givenchy's autumn/winter collection, by British designer Alexander McQueen. Paris spotlight on McQueen and McCartney, page 5

And finally — the News at Eleven



Kamel Ahmed
Media Correspondent

NEW AT TEN, one of Britain's most prestigious news programmes, is to be scrapped under advanced plans being considered by ITV.

In one of the most radical changes to television news since the programme was launched in the 1960s, senior executives at ITV have proposed replacing the half-hour news bulletin with programmes at 6.30pm and 11pm.

The 5.40pm "newsline" bulletin, which lags up to 1 million viewers behind the 6 million who watch the BBC's Six O'Clock News, would also be dumped.

Sources said that David Liddiment, the director of programmes at ITV, has told colleagues that the changes are his "preferred option" for the news programme made famous by the bongs at the start and the "And finally" at the end.

Although stressing that no final decision has been made, executives are considering a change offensive to convince politicians that the move does not represent a marginalisation of news on ITV.

When ITV proposed scrapping News at Ten in 1993 a political backlash meant the plans had to be abandoned.

At the time, Sir Alastair Burnet, the veteran news-caster who presented the bulletin for more than 20 years, described the move as "foolish and contemptible".

John Major, then Prime Minister, said in a letter to Sir George Russell, the chairman of the ITV watchdog, the Independent Television Commission: "I am particularly concerned that the provision of authoritative news may be seriously impaired."

"The announcement was handled very badly last time," one senior ITV source said. "We do not want to ambush the politicians, but rather explain to them why this will make news on ITV even stronger. We want more people to be watching news."

Mr Liddiment's proposals come two months after he pledged that ITV would increase its share of the audience during peak time, despite competition from satellite and cable television. Many media analysts expressed surprise at such a bold claim.

ITV executives are concerned that without a radical overhaul of the whole evening schedule, possibly by the autumn, such a promise will be worthless. One source said that the positioning of ITV's evening news was crucial to the future of the channel.

Advertisers, already angered by the high prices charged by the ITV network, are demanding rapid change.

"We believe they can build and audience by moving the news," said Mandy Pooler, managing director of leading media buyers, Mindshare. "There is unilateral support for the change in the industry."

Moving News at Ten, which is made by ITN for ITV, creates a viewer "hiatus" towards the end of the evening. Drama programmes such as Inspector Morse and Peak Practice, which precede it, regularly bring in more than 10 million viewers, whereas News at Ten's average figure is about 7 million.

That puts the programme, agreed by everyone to be performing strongly, about a million viewers ahead of the BBC's Nine O'Clock News.

"The trouble is that when Trevor McDonald says goodnight, lots of people switch off and go to bed," one executive said. "We want people to be doing that later."

If agreed, the changes will have to be passed by the Independent Television Commission, although some television managers suggested that it is willing to see change.

The major television companies, including Granada and Carlton, are thought to back a change.

The move would bring to an end 30 years of television history since Sir Alastair Burnet presented the first News at Ten in 1967, originally a 12-week experiment ordered by the Independent Television Authority.

Cricket board pressured woman to have abortion

Amelia Gentieman

TIM Lamb, chief executive of the England and Wales Cricket Board, pressured an employee into having an abortion and sacked her afterwards, an industrial tribunal ruled yesterday.

A culture of deep-rooted misogyny dominated the headquarters of cricket, former receptionist Theresa Harrild claimed as she described her treatment at the hands of her employers.

She won her claim of sexual discrimination at the end of a day-long hearing where she detailed how "enormous pressure" from Mr Lamb to have an abortion caused her to suffer a nervous breakdown and

to make two suicide attempts. ECB executives were concerned only to protect the career of Nick Marriner, a development executive, who had made her pregnant during a brief affair, she said. No ECB representatives were present at the hearing and the board offered no defence.

Miss Harrild, aged 32, said Mr Lamb had told her early in January 1997 that it would be "the best thing all round" if "I got rid of it". I felt I was being pressured into a decision I didn't want to make. He told me that if the right career opportunities came along, I couldn't be considered if I was pregnant or had to look after children."

She said that Cliff Barker, the deputy chief executive of the ECB, gave her money for



Harrild and Lamb

a private abortion, and the ECB paid for her to recuperate overnight in the Regent's Park Hilton hotel.

Miss Harrild, who has a 14-year-old son, added: "I felt their involvement was about protecting a male colleague. 'I was just a nasty mess

that had to be cleaned up." She returned to work but was suffering from severe depression. After twice attempting suicide, she was told by her employers in April 1997 to stay at home to recover. They constantly reassured her she would not lose what she described as "her dream job", so she was surprised in June to be visited at home by Mr Barker who handed her a letter of dismissal and offered her a \$5,000 pay-off.

She rejected the money, but said Mr Barker replied: "Take the money and don't make a fuss. There's more where that came from if you're a good girl."

Miss Harrild, who is still severely depressed, said that if she had known she was going to lose her job, she might

not have had a termination. She described the ECB as a deeply chauvinistic place. "The office climate at the ECB was not one where women were treated fairly. It was commonplace for some male staff to make crude and derogatory remarks about women working for the ECB."

"On one occasion I heard one male member of staff say that a female staff member needed her legs prised open with a cricket bat," she said. "Women cricketers were constantly referred to as 'dykes' and 'lesbians'. I personally heard Tim Lamb say: 'Once we get the dykes on board, we will get the lottery money.'"

Christopher Carstairs, tribunal chairman, said: "The tribunal were unanimous in finding that the evidence

given by Miss Harrild was truthful."

The pressure put on Miss Harrild to have an abortion and the perception of her position as "just a job", while Mr Marriner had "a career" constituted sexual discrimination under the 1975 Act.

A spokesman for the ECB said after the case: "The ECB did not pay for the abortion and the remarks attributed to Tim Lamb and Cliff Barker are categorically not true. Miss Harrild paints a distorted picture of the ECB."

"We believed that nothing could be gained by either side by such a public debate. We deny her claims of sexual discrimination and we also reject the various allegations about the staff and management of the ECB."

Austin
AND FINALLY A NICE CUP OF QUALITY AND BED.



Ten for Ten

- Alastair Burnet
- Reginald Renshaw
- Sandy Gall
- Selina Scott
- Anna Ford
- Carol Barnes
- Marilyn Lewis
- Peter Sissons
- Julia Somerville
- Trevor McDonald

Inside	Britain	World News	Finance
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2 NEWS

Sketch Spartan sisters meet Ethics Man



Simon Hoggart

YEARS ago it was commonly said, by women at least, that if women ruled the world there would be no wars. Every thing could be settled over a nice cup of tea. No woman would ever vote for babies being bombed. Then along came Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher, who put a stop to that line of thought. But their terms of office covered the rise of feminism, which produced subtler arguments. One was that men were the violent but essentially innocent victims of testosterone poisoning. Maybe — though it was the women of Sparta who told their men to return from battle either victorious or dead. And it was Ann Winterton (C. Congleton) who stood up quivering before Mr. Mowlem yesterday, as passionate with rage and fury as any Ian Paisley, as ferocious as a frustrated lascar on shore leave, to denounce the peace process in Northern Ireland. "The Unionist community must feel they have been betrayed and devastated! The peace process has been hijacked by Sinn Féin/IRA and now could only be correctly described as [much-needed pause for breath] the appeasement process!" Moments later, Marion Roe (C. Broxbourne) was on her feet snarling about young mother Róisín McAliskey not being sent off to Germany to face trial. The sisters in the Broxbourne and Congleton chapters of SCUM (Society for Cutting Up Men) would have had much to chew on there. Mrs. Roe's contribution started a shaky Prime Minister's Question Time for Tony Blair. William Hague scored several times over Britain's failure to sign a UN resolution condemning China over human rights. The decision has been described by Wei Jingsheng, China's best known dissident, as "stupefying".

"The Foreign Secretary," said Mr. Hague, "poses unconsciously as Ethics Man. But the first time the Ethical Foreign Policy is put to the test, there is no trace of it." Mr. Blair provided no reason for this surprising decision, beyond saying: "We did not think, in the circumstances, that it was the right thing to do." A meaningless formulation which he later called "the reasons I have given". ("Why did you nick the money, Biggles?" "I thought it was the right thing to do." "But why?" "For the reasons I have given.") Paddy Ashdown tried to persuade him that Parliament was the guarantor of standards at Times newspapers, and in particular their coverage of China. He did not say, though it hung in the air like the fumes from an opium pipe, that this might be one more example of Mr. Blair's kowtowing to the gerontocratic tyrant, Murdoch. Then David Amess (C. Southend W) managed to raise the question of the Labour MPs who have signed a motion calling for the abolition of the Lord Chancellor, or at least his replacement by a Justice Minister. Mr. Amess asked Mr. Blair to give this "sober" consideration, an example of what might be "innuendo and out the other". Then just as Mr. Blair — who looked tired and tense throughout — might have felt all hope was lost, along came Dr. Julian Lewis. Dr. Lewis is a collector of facts, and yesterday he poured out a shoebox full. Rape victims in psychiatric hospitals! Sean Connery's knighthood! And worst of all, the honour for "Eric Hobsbawm, a life-long Communist who just happens to be the father of the business partner of the girlfriend of the Chancellor of the Exchequer!" Dr. Lewis (he is not a real doctor, i.e. a spin doctor, but the academic type) looked pained by the hilarity this revelation occasioned. But it enabled Mr. Blair to get away with a serious porky pie. When Martin Bell complained about planted questions from MPs, he replied: "Perish the day that anyone is encouraged to ask any question at all." Pinocchio's nose would have fallen off in shame.

Review Not quite Young, but Butler did it

Caroline Sullivan

Bernard Butler
Upstairs at The Garage

PLAYING one of London's smallest venues for four consecutive Tuesdays is a very Bernard Butlerish thing to do. The main contender for pop's most reticent over-guitarist, Butler probably needs the week between gigs to recover from the stress of bawling himself in front of the public, even if it's only 200 people at The Garage's closest annex. Being alone onstage must have tested the fortitude of a character too shy to sing his own songs until a few months ago. But he made a pretty good job of it. Dapping his Julia Roberts hair, gamely outstaring the back row 30 feet away, even talking, albeit mostly in cryptic remarks such as "I got punched tonight, so I feel like a man". It's the solo career no one envisaged when he quit Suede in 1994. His departure from the band that founded Britpop was unamicable, and much lamented by fans of his classic English-gram style. But the McAlmont-Butler project that followed ended even more acrimoniously. Accused by soulster David McAlmont of racism and homophobia, Butler hooked up with The Verve, only to leave after a week. Going out on his own was pretty much the only option left. Creation Records, which releases the debut album *People Move On* on April 6, considers its signing "an English Neil Young". One senses Butler is not displeased with the idea. His stage demeanour was as close to Young's as a twenty-something Londoner could get: in other words, not very, but he tried. He has some way to go before he replicates the old buzzard's crusty-loner persona, but the seeds of a Youngly passionate free spirit are there. It was a classic singer-songwriter show, all angst, awkwardness and, what with the stagelike glittering white candles, a hint of twyness. Butler was often lost in a private landscape somewhere between north London and northern California. The singles *Stay* and *Not Alone* may be beguiling pop spangles on the radio; live, they took on a regal gravitas that would have impressed old Neil himself. Despite the lack of the orchestral trimmings found on the record, *Not Alone* was a solemn, touching ode to his wife and son. Speaking of the latter, when You Grow managed to celebrate his offspring while avoiding the noisomeness that usually infests such things. Once he had settled down on his stool he quickly grew so confident he was hardly recognised as Suede's shadowy wrath. It could have been the unvarnished format, for it's hard to screw up too badly with just a microphone and acoustic guitar. It could have been his uncomplicated strumming and delicate vocals, which pleased to be liked. But even if he'd had the arrogance of label-mate Liam Gallagher, no one could have failed to appreciate the moving simplicity of the music. Less than an hour, no encore. Butler did it. *This review appeared in later editions yesterday.*

'Loutish' Top Gear series comes under investigation

Geoffrey Gibbs

BROADCASTING watchdogs have launched an investigation into the BBC's Top Gear motoring programme following a complaint by a road safety group that it is setting a bad example to young drivers. Presenters of the programme, fronted by Jeremy

Clarkson, have been accused of "loutish" and "laddish" behaviour during filmed high speed tests. The Broadcasting Standards Commission confirmed yesterday that it had asked to see tapes of two programmes broadcast in December after receiving a complaint from a member of the road safety advisory group at Exeter city council.

Major report reaffirms link between passive smoking and disease but ministers unlikely to legislate New push for smoking ban

Sarah Boseley
Health Correspondent

SMOKING should be banned in public buildings and in all but a few areas of public transport, a government-appointed committee of medical experts recommended yesterday. The report of the Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (ScotH) makes a "definitive link" between passive smoking and killer diseases, and provides the scientific evidence which will be the basis for the Government's white paper on smoking, said Sir Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer. "The Government accepts the scientific recommenda-

tions and the evidence within this report," Sir Kenneth said. "These recommendations will clearly be carefully looked at and implemented... will follow in the white paper later in the year." The authors of the report call for employers to ban smoking in the workplace "wherever possible". But while the report will add to the pressures on smokers to quit or hide themselves away, the Government is not expected to try to pass laws to outlaw smoking in public places. While ministers welcomed the report, they would prefer voluntary agreements. Conscious of the difficulties of enforcement, they are keen to introduce legislation only where nothing else works. The committee, which took

four years to review the scientific evidence that cigarettes cause diseases, found that living with a smoker increased a non-smoker's chances of getting lung cancer by 25 per cent and of getting ischaemic heart disease by 23 per cent. Sir Kenneth and the authors of the report accused the tobacco industry of deliberately misrepresenting a study on passive smoking commissioned by the World Health Organisation at the weekend. The industry claimed the study had been suppressed by the WHO and that it had found that inhaling other people's smoke was not harmful. Nicholas Wald, one of the report's authors, said: "This is a total misrepresentation of the truth." One of the most alarming

findings of the ScotH report was how far children were endangered by their parents' smoking. Babies run twice the risk of cot death if their mother smokes, it said. Children's chances of asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia and glue ear also increased. The report also voices profound concern about the increasing numbers of young people, and especially girls, taking up smoking. There are 120,000 deaths a year attributable to smoking in this country. "The enormous damage to health and life arising from smoking should no longer be accepted," the report says. "The Government should take effective action to limit this preventable epidemic." It should also require the

industry to accept that smoking causes premature death, and come clean about the risks to its customers. Anti-smoking campaigners welcomed the report. Clive Bates, director of Ash (Action on Smoking and Health) said the question was "whether the Government has the political guts to act on the advice of its own committee" when drafting the white paper. Bill O'Neill, science adviser to the British Medical Association, said the evidence, published in the journal *Thorax* as well as in the ScotH report, "explains why the tobacco industry has been engaged in a desperate disinformation campaign. They do not want to be linked to death and illness in children. But they cannot escape that link. They

spend millions recruiting new young smokers who will be the parents of tomorrow's sick children." Angela Hilton, of the British Thoracic Society, said the medical evidence "pieces the screen of confusion the tobacco industry have created on this issue". She called for protection for children, perhaps through smoke-free zones in public places. The tobacco industry was unrepentant. John Carlisle, executive director of the Tobacco Manufacturers' Association, insisted the link between passive smoking and diseases was not proven. "We are giving a warning to the Government not to panic into considering some form of legislation or even strict voluntary advice on public places."



The Right Rev James Jones, whose appointment signals the plans New Labour may have for the Church of England

'Private life has a bearing on public office. An invitation to vote is an invitation to trust — character is relevant'

The Right Rev James Jones on Robin Cook

High-profile post for bishop who criticised Cook

Madeline Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

AN outspoken advocate of family values who publicly criticised Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's conduct of his personal life was appointed Bishop of Liverpool yesterday. The evangelical and media-friendly Right Rev James Jones, Bishop of Hull, will succeed the Right Rev David Sheppard in one of the highest-profile jobs in the Church of England. The appointment, delayed by Tony Blair's rejection of the first shortlist last October, has been the subject of considerable speculation and controversy. Concern had been voiced over the power of the Prime Minister to intervene in the appointment of bishops, and the diocese had expressed a preference for a local man. Bishop Jones signals the kind of plans New Labour may have in mind for a more dynamic and vigorous leadership of the Church of England. At a press conference to announce his appointment yesterday, he echoed Blairite themes, saying: "Regeneration must be spiritual and moral as well as economic." His evangelical churchmanship differs from the Prime Minister's own High Church leanings, but in many other respects he is a man in Blair's mould. Energetic and keenly conscious of the church's image problems, he is a good communicator, broadcasting on Thought for the Day and keenly interested in the role of modern media. But he was the only church leader to speak publicly criticising Mr. Cook over taking his partner abroad on work trips. "The private life has a bearing on public office. An invitation to vote is an invitation to trust. Character is relevant. This is a principle of public governance," he insisted yesterday. The new bishop also paid tribute to his predecessor: "I am daunted and inspired by this greatest honour to come

to this city and to be called to succeed one of the greatest modern bishops. I will serve the area with all the vigour that God gives me." Bishop Jones has long been tipped for the job at Liverpool. One of the most prominent in the Church of England, and one of the most difficult given the stature of his predecessor. He has been widely seen as being on a fast track: he was appointed to Hull as a suffragan bishop at 45, only 11 years after he had been ordained as priest. The 34 years in Hull have given him experience of working in an economically

deprived port city where he has been closely involved in economic regeneration, which will prove valuable in Liverpool. One of the most important aspects of the Liverpool post will be his relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, an area where Bishop Sheppard and Archbishop Derek Warlock blazed a trail in Anglican Catholic rapprochement. The current Archbishop of Liverpool, the Right Rev Patrick Kelly, offered a warm welcome to the new man yesterday. Bishop Jones had always insisted that he would refuse

any offer to move to Liverpool because of his love of Hull, and concern about disrupting the education of his three daughters for the fourth time in eight years. There is even speculation that he did initially turn down the job, and was not therefore on the shortlist which Mr. Blair rejected in October. "When the letter came from the Prime Minister, we prayed and thought about it," he said. "My first inclination was 'no', but after due reflection in my family we began to discern that it was the word of God. Leaving Hull was the hardest decision of my life."

O'Reilly sews up £29m deal for Independent

Simon Beavis
and Karim Ahmed

TONY O'REILLY, the Irish media magnate and Heinz chairman, yesterday finally won control of the Independent and immediately pledged to use American editorial methods and to inject up to £50 million over five years to restore its fortunes. The £29.4 million deal was stitched together at lunchtime, half an hour after a press conference to announce the news had been scheduled to start. The transaction entails Mr. O'Reilly buying out the Mirror Group's 46 per cent holding in Newspaper Publishing, and an 8 per cent holding owned by the Spanish publishing group Prisa. In a curious development, former Independent editor Andrew Marr is to return as

editor-in-chief with responsibility for the papers' two pages of comment and opinion almost six weeks after being ousted. Rosie Boycott, who succeeded him amid acrimony, will oversee the rest of the papers' content. Veteran US journalist Ben Bradlee, a director of Mr. O'Reilly's newspaper group, said having two editors was a classic "separation of powers" operating on many US newspapers. The aim of the new owners was to drive the paper upmarket, he added. The target is to increase circulation of the daily from 235,000 to just 250,000, and that of the Sunday from 270,290 to 300,000, within three years. City analysts said the relatively small gain in the daily's circulation could put it into modest profit against losses of £7 million last year. Most observers agreed the

move was a boost for the papers, removing the debilitating clashes between Mr. O'Reilly and the Mirror Group chief executive David Montgomery over their direction. Mr. O'Reilly's group, the Dublin-based Independent Newspapers, is paying £3.4 million and taking on £26 million of Mirror debt. The total debt carried by the two papers now stands at £50 million. The Mirror retains a contract to provide back office facilities for the Independent such as printing, distribution and IT and the paper will remain at the Mirror's Canary Wharf offices in London. Mr. Marr suggested any differences that might have arisen with Ms. Boycott had been buried. He promised the two would work in close harmony with management to take the paper upmarket, while Ms. Boycott described the duo as "a kind of dream team".

Guardian's Toynbee wins journalism prize

GUARDIAN columnist Polly Toynbee last night won the journalism prize in the 1997 Orwell Prize Awards. The judges, biographers Fiona MacCarthy and Bernard Crick, and former Observer editor Donald Treford, praised "her quality of writing, her sturdy independence

of mind, and not least her sheer stamina. Most columnists deteriorate with the passing years. Polly Toynbee just gets better." Another Guardian writer, George Monbiot, was on the shortlist. Patricia Hollis won the book category for *Jenny Lee: A Life*. The shortlist of six included

The Lie, The Fall of Jonathan Aitken by Guardian journalists Luke Harding, David Leigh and David Pallister. The awards are administered by the George Orwell Memorial Trust and inspired by his remark that his ambition was "to make political writing into an art".

HELLO! magazine advertisement featuring Victoria Beckham. The ad includes a CD offer and promotional text.

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HELLO! magazine advertisement featuring Victoria Beckham. The ad includes a CD offer and promotional text.

French singer exhibit paternity

Government

den

DNA test on Yves Montand

Père-Lachaise:
place of rest?

□ A vast, Gothic final resting place in north-east Paris for more than 1 million souls, it is dubbed "the world's most visited cemetery". Some 1.5 million people a year tour its 70,000 ornate tombs.

□ Among its residents are Montand and Signoret, composers Chopin and Bizet, singer Edith Piaf, playwright Molière, novelists Balzac and Proust, and medieval lovers Abelard and Heloise.

□ The most visited tomb is that of Jim Morrison, lead singer of the 1960s American rock band The Doors — the only one with a permanent guard.

□ Oscar Wilde is the second most-visited grave, and sparked the cemetery's last big controversy. Soon after his burial in 1900, the headstone of his tomb — an Epstein carving of a very obviously male angel — was considered so offensive that the head keeper castrated it and kept the testicles as a paperweight.

□ Getting buried there is not cheap. A 6ft plot without headstone or decoration costs £2,650 to lease in perpetuity.



A man covers the tomb of Yves Montand in Paris's Père-Lachaise cemetery, where the star's remains were exhumed yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: JACK GUEZ

French star rises from the grave

Singer exhumed
in paternity suit

Jon Henley in Paris

HIS lovers were legendary: Edith Piaf, Simone Signoret, Marilyn Monroe. His films were famous: *The Wages of Fear*, *Jean de Florette*. His songs were smash hits: *Autumn Leaves*, *Les Grands Boulevards*, *Clementine*. But to France's horror, the final starring role of Yves Montand, the quintessential Gallic crooner and one of the country's best-loved entertainers, will be as the first man in French history to be dug up from his grave for the sake of a paternity suit.

"I can't believe it," said a distraught Catherine Allégret, his adopted daughter. "This poor old man. They're actually taking him out of his box to slice him up."

On the orders of a Paris court, Montand's remains were exhumed yesterday eve-

ning after closing time at the city's famous Père-Lachaise cemetery, where he shares a tomb with Signoret, his wife of 37 years. The grave was covered with a tent and cordoned off by police from early afternoon.

"It's horrible, just horrible," said Dominique Pinol, the lawyer representing Montand's heirs, Ms Allégret and his last partner, Carole Amiel. "Psychologically and morally, it is deeply painful for the whole family."

A panel of three doctors at the Paris Medical-Legal Institute now has until June 30 to determine whether DNA samples from Montand's teeth and bones prove he was indeed the father of Aurora Drossart, a 22-year-old student who swears she is his daughter.

The samples will be compared with blood or tissue cells taken from Ms Drossart and her mother, Anne, with whom the star had a two-year



Aurora Drossart (left) claims to be the daughter of Yves Montand (right) and hopes for an end to the nine-year court battle to prove his paternity. 'I want a wrong put right,' she says



affair in the 1970s while she was a budding actress.

The grisly procedure should finally bring to an end a bitter court battle that has raged since 1989, when Anne Drossart — who is now a lawyer — and her daughter first filed the paternity suit.

Montand was then as popular, and as wealthy, as he had ever been. Seen both at home and abroad as the epitome of Frenchness, the silken-voiced singer was in fact born in Tuscany, Italy, in 1921 as Ivo Livi. He took his stage name from his mother's surname

when he played down in the street as a little boy: "Ivo, Montand".

He first found fame in the 1950s when he starred with the legendary songstress Piaf, whose lover he became for three years. A string of hit songs and films in France, Italy and Hollywood over the next 20 odd years assured his success and, after a rather barren 1980s, he was rescued by acclaim for the classic films of Provence life *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des Sources*.

In a 1988 survey 30 per cent

of French people polled said they would vote for him if he ran for president.

But in 1990 a judge ordered him to undergo DNA testing. Montand repeatedly refused, insisting he was not Aurora's father, and he died, aged 70, of a heart attack the following year — three days before he was due to testify again. All France mourned.

In 1994, on the basis of testimony and Aurora's close physical resemblance to the actor, the court ruled that she was indeed Montand's daughter, entitling her to a share in

his fortune. Under French law at least half a person's assets must be divided equally after death among surviving children.

Ms Allégret, however, refused to accept the verdict, and last November an appeals court took the unprecedented and controversial step of ordering the exhumation for posthumous DNA test.

France was horrified. The health minister, Bernard Kouchner, accused the Drossarts of being more interested in money than scientific truth. The head of the National Ethics Committee, Jean-Pierre Changeux, pointed out that prior consent had always been a condition of genetic testing and that the decision set a dangerous precedent.

The papers were even more outraged, with headlines ranging from "Morbid and regrettable" to "Leave Montand in peace".

The size of Montand's fortune has never been revealed. But Aurora Drossart has always maintained she simply wants the truth to be known. "Believe me, it's not very easy to live with the label of 'legal error'," she said recently. "I want a wrong put right."

US to expel
dissident
Iraqis who
helped CIA

Martin Kettle in Washington

THE Clinton administration's disarray over its policy towards Iraq was embarrassingly exposed yesterday when a California judge ordered the deportation of six Iraqis who worked for the CIA in abortive plots to topple Saddam Hussein.

The judge's ruling, at the instigation of the FBI and immigration authorities, means the six Iraqis may be deported to Iraq, where they would almost certainly face execution, their lawyers said yesterday.

Their return would only deepen the suspicions of Arab and Iraqi opposition groups about United States policy towards Baghdad, diplomatic sources said.

The court order comes at a time when President Bill Clinton is under intense pressure from the Republican-dominated Congress to plough financial and military support into Iraqi opposition groups as part of a strategy for toppling President Saddam — a policy recently described by the Gulf war commander General Norman Schwarzkopf as "Easy as Hard".

Judge D. D. Sitzgraves ruled in Los Angeles that the six Iraqis, who are in jail in California, are "a danger to the national security of the United States". The ruling was made despite an admission by Washington that the six men were offered refuge in the US after two CIA plots against President Saddam collapsed in 1996.

Although the six have not yet exhausted their legal appeals, the terms of the deportation orders mean they will be sent to Iraq unless the US attorney-general, Janet Reno, finds another country willing to take them.

The ruling against Ali Yasin Mohammed Karim and five other Iraqis was largely based on secret testimony by FBI agents and was issued in closed court by Judge Sitzgraves on Monday. The judge

also ruled that the reasoning for her 92-page decision was too secret to be published.

The six Iraqis say they worked for two Washington-backed resistance movements inside Iraq: the Iraqi National Congress and the Iraqi National Accord. Both received millions of dollars in secret aid from the CIA, the administration has confirmed.

"We came to this land legally, on account of the US government, and they put us in jail," Mr Karim told the New York Times. "Where is the law?"

The other men are Safi al-Harzi, Adil Hadi Awash, Mohammed Jawad al-Ammari, Mohammed Tuma and Ali Saleh. All are in their 30s, apart from Mr Awash who is 29.

They were offered refuge by the US after top-secret opposition military campaigns were smashed by President Saddam's tanks and troops in 1996, when his army intervened in inter-Kurdish fighting in northern Iraq. The failure of the campaigns was widely attributed to divisions within the opposition, and there were claims that some factions had been penetrated by Baghdad intelligence.

The jailed men were among 600 Iraqis evacuated to Turkey with CIA assistance under the noses of the advancing Iraqi troops in August and September 1996.

They were moved by the US, along with 5,500 other Iraqis and Kurds, to the US military base at Guam, in the western Pacific, and told to apply for political asylum.

When they arrived in California in April 1997 they were immediately imprisoned in local jails and in immigration detention centres, although their wives and children were allowed to settle.

The Iraqis claim they were falsely accused of being Baghdad's spies as a result of infighting in resistance groups.

Mr Clinton said yesterday the US would consult United Nations Security Council members before any attack on Iraq, though he insisted Washington did not need UN approval to launch an attack.

Schools in well-off areas
accused of complacency

continued from page 1

Public Policy Research he told councils to embrace a radical agenda for change or be swept aside to make way for more willing partners, including private business.

Mr Blunkett has given local education authorities a key role in raising standards by setting targets for school improvement, but Mr Blair has warned they could lose their education powers if they fail to deliver.

The commission ranked education authorities by the proportion of children entitled to free school meals — the most appropriate measurement of family poverty which has often been linked to low achievement.

Among the 15 most prosperous authorities, Buckinghamshire got 60 per cent of pupils through GCSE with at least five good results. Lincolnshire, Hereford and Worcester, Warwickshire, East Riding of Yorkshire, South Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and Somerset scored below 50 per cent. Spending per pupil in Buckinghamshire was the lowest of the 15.

Among the 15 least prosperous authorities, Camden had a GCSE score of 40 per cent compared with 20 per cent in

Southwark and less than 30 per cent in Manchester, Liverpool, Knowsley and the London boroughs of Islington, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets and Haringey.

The commission found chronic delays in the assessment of children to establish if they had special educational needs. Barnsley, Sandwell, Sefton, Stockport, Salford, Lambeth and Middlesbrough handled less than 5 per cent of cases within the 16-week target set by the Government.

Some authorities achieved marked improvements in performance on special needs between 1995/6 and 1996/7. St Helens increased the proportion of cases handled within 16 weeks by more than 60 per cent and Harrow and Cornwall by more than 40 per cent. But the proportion handled on time fell by 20 per cent or more in Redbridge, Greenwich, Stockport, Northumberland and Bedfordshire.

"In some cases, services for the most vulnerable children are frankly unacceptable," Mr Vevers said.

The Local Government Association said the report would help authorities to improve their performance, but the indicators were "quite crude".

Government gets a grip after South Bank fiasco

Dan Gialster
Arts Correspondent

THE Government yesterday took a grip on the failed South Bank Centre redevelopment scheme, announcing the formation of a broad working group to examine ways forward.

Following the collapse of the £135 million "glass wave" scheme designed by the architect Lord Rogers, which was rejected by the Arts Council after two years of preparation at a cost of £2 million, the Government is understood to be keen to involve a wider range

of interests in the centre's future. The previous plan became embroiled in negotiation between the South Bank Centre and the Arts Council.

The Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, said: "We now need urgently to identify an alternative way forward. That is why I have invited all those with a strong interest to take part from the outset in the discussion of new options for the area."

The first meeting will include the South Bank Centre, the Arts Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund, organisations involved in the previous scheme. Other parties will be

invited to participate, including the South Bank Employers Group, the Cross-River Partnership, the Department of the Environment, Lambeth Council and Paul Hamlyn. Lord Hamlyn had promised £17 million towards the previous scheme, but conditional on the entire plan receiving approval.

The political fallout from the collapse of the scheme continued as the Conservative culture spokesman, Francis Maude, claimed it was a result of the Government's introduction of a sixth good cause to share lottery proceeds.

"The project is the first

major casualty of the Government's raid on the lottery," he said. "The arts are losing out because the Government is taking money from the lottery to subsidise its own social programmes."

Mr Maude's claims were rejected by a government spokesman. "Mr Maude is, as ever, flogging a dead political horse. The money for the sixth good cause comes from increased lottery revenues."

Parties involved in the Lord Rogers scheme, which included vital refurbishment of the Royal Festival Hall and the Hayward Gallery, as well as regeneration of the sur-

rounding area, were busy yesterday apportioning blame for its failure. There were suggestions that the fault lay with the application for lottery money prepared by the South Bank Centre. Despite the competition for the development being won in 1994, a completed bid was not received by the Arts Council until last December.

Nicholas Snowman, chief executive of the centre, rejected criticisms. "Any failure of the project is because the Arts Council has not got the money," he said. "I was encouraged to submit a large bid to the Arts Council, but in

the wake of the outcry over the award to the Royal Opera House there was a major political glitch."

The Arts Council too came under attack for allowing the bid to lose momentum. The Government's wider consultation exercise is designed to put an end to the infighting that stalled the application.

The most likely approach to a new scheme will be piece-meal development, taking as a starting point the available finances, and matching them to the needs of the centre.

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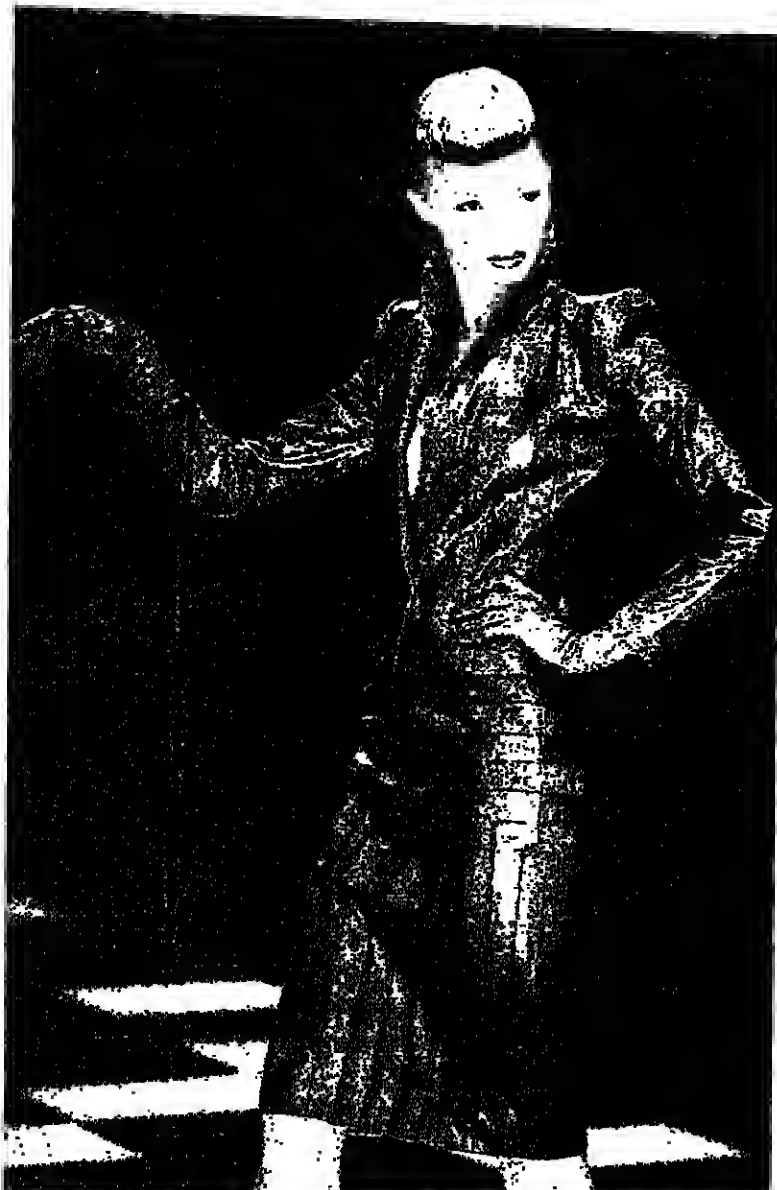
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Sally Brampton finds fashion vying with fame

Paris spotlight stays fixed on McQueen



A polished silhouette in leather (left) typifies McQueen's offerings in Givenchy's ready-to-wear collection

PHOTOGRAPH MICHEL EULER



Stella McCartney flanked by models as she takes a bow on the catwalk at the end of the show

PHOTOGRAPH JACK DABAGHAN



Sir Paul and Lady McCartney cheering on their daughter on her second outing for Chloe

PHOTOGRAPH BRUNO PELLERIN



ACTRESS Kate Winslet was in the front row at the Givenchy show in Paris yesterday, despite refusing seats at the London collections on the ground that celebrities should not eclipse designers.

Not much chance of that in the case of Alexander McQueen. The British designer, still aged only 28, is on a roll. His own-label collection was acclaimed in London two weeks ago, and yesterday he sent out his most powerful collection for Givenchy to date.

Lacquer red, striking blue and flannel grey were worked into the strong-shouldered tailoring for which he is famous and the sleek, polished silhouette that gets the crowds roaring. And roar they did, especially when McQueen did a dance on his triumphant

promenade down the catwalk. He had every right to look pleased with himself, as did Bernard Arnault, president of LVMH, the luxury goods company that backs McQueen at Givenchy, and John Galiano at Dior.

McQueen's skill as a tailor and his Savile Row experience were much in evidence in leather jackets worked in signature chev-

rons of hline and grey leather, an idea carried through into brief clinging dresses made of black silk, python and organza strips. These are the sorts of miracles of engineering for which the Paris ateliers are justly famous. It was a high voltage show, with green lasers, a black and white checkerboard catwalk that hurt into light with every step the models took, and the brand of edgy, sexy

glamour that young British designers have such a talent for. Earlier, other celebrities sat front-row at Stella McCartney's second show for Chloe, but here their presence did threaten to overwhelm proceedings. This time it was mum and dad, Paul and Linda, together with pop star friends who hogged the limelight. Photographers crowding on to the catwalk

even after the show began had to be removed. The collection "dedicated to my mum" was a very different take on British style. It was Portobello Goes to Pigalle, with just-got-out-of-bed hair and make-up and the velvet and chiffon flea market dresses mixed with nipped-in tailored jackets that every Portobello chick likes to wear — and Stella McCartney has made her own.

But what once looked cute is beginning to look cheap and cheesy. McCartney is going to have to move on from the hip and trashed-up sexuality that has made London style a byword for "cool" if Chloe is to achieve the international sales it is planning: a huge shop in New York and another in Tokyo, both opening in August.

However, these are the kinds of young, sexy clothes that some women go mad for, and they need a more intimate setting than the Paris venue to show them at their best. The catwalk as big a football pitch swamped what were basically two strongly commercial ideas.

But it is early days for McCartney, aged 26, who needs time — and less of the celebrity spotlight — to get into her stride as a designer.

Pheromones the bait in sex trap

Human
aroma
gives
sexual
signal
that
must
be
obeyed



Something in the air... The Naiad by John William Waterhouse. Scientists have now pinned down the function of pheromones

Tina Bradford
Science Editor

SCIENTISTS have proved for the first time that humans communicate by silent sexual chemistry.

Pheromones are odourless, invisible, airborne chemicals. Ants, moths and beetles have them to send each other messages. Humans choose a mate with them, while male elephants use them to signal dominance.

Biologists have always believed that humans give off pheromones and can detect them in others at subliminal levels. There is a furtive trade in supposedly aphrodisiac products based on human pheromones.

In the journal Nature today, two psychologists report definitive evidence that humans respond to pheromones. Kathleen Stern and Martha McClintock, from Chicago, started from the observed fact that menstrual cycles of women living together are likely to coincide.

They collected underarm moisture on cotton pads from volunteers and dabbed the swabs — which also held alcohol — on the upper lips of other women. These women were asked not to wash their faces for six hours. The researchers

did this daily for two months. The volunteers reported being able to detect the alcohol under their noses, but nothing else. But more than two-thirds of the women exposed to the natural odours of another woman altered their menstrual cycle.

A whiff of someone in one phase of the cycle moved others towards ovulation more quickly. A swab taken at a different time had the opposite effect. Cycles were shortened by up to 14 days, and lengthened by up to 12 days. That told the team there are at least two pheromones.

John Pickett, of the Rothamsted research station in Hertfordshire, said yesterday that, though the compounds had yet to be identified, they could be developed to predict the onset of oestrus for contraception "or for avoiding having a period" at an inconvenient time.

The research might also one day explain why mood can be changed by aromatherapy. Rat pheromones are unlikely to lead people by the nose to love.

Human passions are thought to be too complicated and conditioned by social learning. This opens the way for potential diagnostics, said Dr Pickett, "but not for getting a partner at a disco."

Guilty doctors 'get off lightly'

Sarah Boseley
Health Correspondent

MOST doctors who break the criminal law, including those found guilty of sexual offences against patients, are allowed back into general practice, a television documentary claims tonight.

A computer survey was made by Channel 4's Dispatches programme of 215 doctors convicted of crimes in the courts and then called before the disciplinary committee of the General Medical Council, the body that regulates the profession in the last 21 years.

Some of the offences, which were committed during the past 21 years, were minor, such as drink-driving. Others were not.

The survey found that 70 per cent of the doctors were allowed to continue working

or else got back on the Medical Register after an average gap of about four years.

Sixteen doctors who were convicted of sexual offences against their patients have been allowed back to work.

The programme points out that patients may have no idea of their doctor's past, although the GMC will tell them if they inquire.

They may also wrongly believe that the phrase "struck off" means a doctor will never work again.

Yet over those 21 years, nearly half of all the doctors struck off were allowed back on the Medical Register.

The programme tells the story of a doctor who was convicted for making obscene phone calls to his patients. One woman became so distressed that she tried to kill herself.

He was fined and ordered to pay compensation to his victims in January 1995.

Four months later he was called before the GMC. He could have been struck off. Instead, he was admonished and allowed to continue working.

He now has a job in a hospital casualty department.

Another doctor was regularly supplying drugs to a heroin addict in return for sex.

The girl left the area for a new life, but went home for a visit to her mother in January 1986 and got another drugs supply from the doctor.

The following day she was found dead from an overdose. The doctor was hanged from prescribing hard drugs by Manchester crown court. He ignored the court order and was fined. He was struck off by the GMC, but applied to be reinstated.

In March 1992, he was back on the register.

Last year the same doctor went before the GMC again

for failing to treat a patient who collapsed in the street and then later died.

It could have been the end of his career, but he was only admonished. He is now working as a locum in Liverpool.

Sam Everington, a member of the British Medical Association council, said he found the figures on doctors returning to work "absolutely shocking".

Dr Everington added: "I'm involved in medical politics. I did not know this was going on and I suspect that the vast majority of doctors in this country are not aware of those figures."

But the GMC claims much has changed in the past five years.

It has doubled the number of lay members on the GMC, and published new standards for the profession. "Statistics that are more than five years old are not relevant because they do not reflect the way the

GMC works today," said a statement.

In the past five years, the council has heard 251 cases; 85 per cent of the doctors were found guilty of serious professional misconduct and of those "well over half were required to stop practising".

Thirty doctors were found guilty on indecency charges and 70 per cent of those were struck off. Three-quarters of those struck off did not return to the register.

Sir Donald Irvine, president of the GMC, said: "We are pressing ahead with our programme of modernisation and improvement."

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Three women soldiers killed in minibus crash

Raziah Noori

THREE British women were killed and another was seriously injured when a lorry smashed into their minibus on a motorway outside Calais yesterday.

Privates Tanya Braithwaite, aged 18, from Merthyr Tydfil, in south Wales, Louise Jones, aged 21, from Bicester, Oxfordshire, and Emma Leighton, aged 19, from Poole, Dorset, all from the 7th Transport Regiment, were part of a seven-strong armed forces basketball team travelling to the port.

Their minibus was parked on the hard shoulder of the A16 at Oye-Plage when the accident happened at 1.30am.

The driver of the heavy goods vehicle was slightly injured but was later dis-

charged from hospital. A police spokesman said last night that a Dutchman was being questioned.

"We do not yet know the full details of the accident, but it seems that the minibus had broken down and was on the hard shoulder with its lights flashing when the lorry went into the back of it," a police spokesman said.

The woman who was seriously injured was immediately taken to a hospital 10 miles away in Calais but was then transferred to Lille, 70 miles away, to a larger hospital better suited to deal with her injuries.

Following the accident, French authorities were confused over the nationalities of the victims.

The basketball team, all aged between 20 and 22, had been travelling to Britain

from their base in Germany for a competition.

The remaining three women were slightly injured and were treated in the hospital in Calais.

"They were suffering from shock after the accident," a Ministry of Defence spokesman said last night.

Lieutenant Colonel David Lampshire, commanding officer of the 7th Transport Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, said all ranks sent "their sincerest condolences" to the families of the victims.

"The girls were popular and active members of the Regiment and as a consequence the accident has had a profound effect on everyone within this unit," he said.

He added as a mark of respect sporting and social events in the regiment had been cancelled.

6 WORLD NEWS

Israelis battle rioters after bus killings

Report: Julian Borger

THE Israeli army deployed troops and armoured cars yesterday in an attempt to contain rioting which spread across the West Bank after three Palestinian workers were shot dead at a military checkpoint.

Two Israeli paratroopers were being questioned yesterday about the shooting, which happened on Tuesday night.

Israeli reports said the troops opened fire when a minibus carrying Palestinian workers veered violently and ran over one of them.

The only Palestinian survivor, a passenger in the minibus, said shooting was the consequence of a misunderstanding between the soldiers — one of whom waved the minibus forward — and the vehicle hit the soldier only after the driver had been shot. The survivor has so far not been questioned by military investigators.

The three victims were hurled yesterday in their home village, Dura, in a sea of green flags, showing allegiance to the radical Islamic movement Hamas — a vivid gauge of the steady radicalisation of the West Bank in the year since the collapse of the peace process.

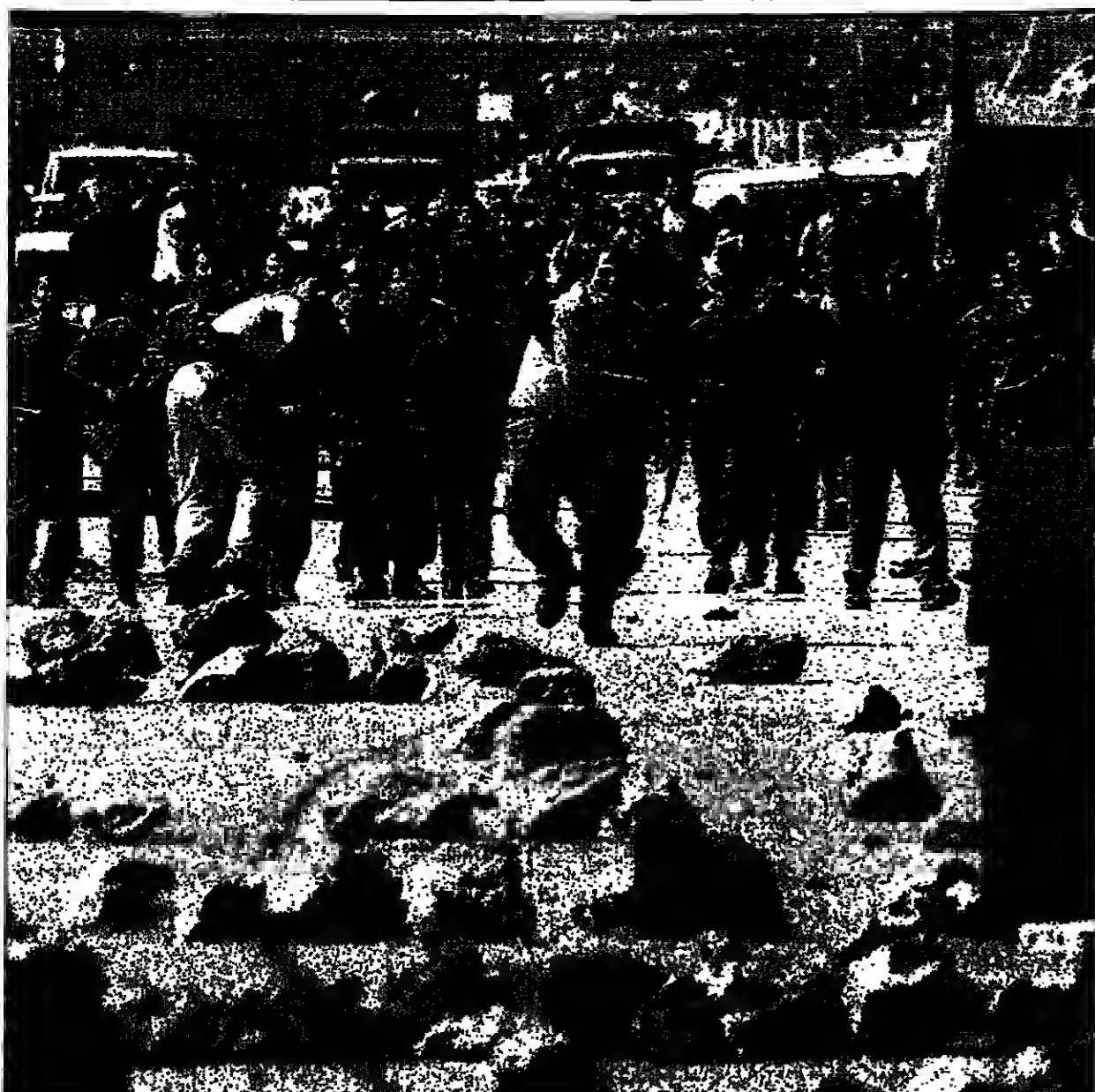
The Hamas leader, Abdel-Aziz al-Rantissi, warned: "This deed should be confronted by a strong reaction."

He did not specify the kind of reaction he was recommending. Hamas's military wing has carried out a series of suicide bombings in recent years.

Rioters hurling petrol bombs and stones clashed with Israeli troops in central Hebron, in Dura, eight miles to the west, and in Ramallah, north of Jerusalem. More than 20 demonstrators were reported injured, some seriously, by the army's rubber-coated bullets.

The Israeli Defence Force moved extra troops into the area, and armoured cars could be seen waiting on the side of the road leading into Hebron from Jerusalem.

Some of the mourners at the funeral warned that a new Intifada would explode on the West Bank if the IDF tried to cover up Tuesday's shooting. But the Israeli press quoted an Israeli general as saying: "It seems the soldiers acted in accordance with regulations,



Demonstrators, watched by armed Palestinian police, throw stones at Israeli troops in the town of Ramallah as anger flared throughout the West Bank at the shooting of three construction workers at a roadblock. PHOTOGRAPH: JACQUELINE LARMA

but the details are being checked."

By last night the Israelis had made no attempt to interview the Palestinian survivor, All Abu Znaid. His account of the shooting has potentially explosive implications, because it suggests that the Israeli troops opened fire without serious provocation.

Mr Abu Znaid worked on an Israeli construction site with two of the victims. They were sharing a minibus home when they arrived at the Turkamya checkpoint, west of Dura, at about 6pm.

"There were three lines of cars waiting at the roadblock. We were in the middle one behind a big truck and cars were passing us on either side," he said.

A soldier to our right made a sign at us that we

should pass the truck on the other side. But the soldier on the left did not know and as we pulled out, he must have thought we were driving towards him, and raised his rifle and shot the driver, Mohammed Shehdi Sharawneh, killing him.

"Then the car went out of control and hit the plastic barriers and the hut where the soldiers were, and we may have hit one of them. And then the shots came from all directions. My two friends on either side of me were hit and fell on me. Their bodies protected me from the bullets."

"One of the workers, Isak Bayed Ahmed, opened the door and was shouting in Hebrew, 'We are workers,' but the shooting carried on."

Later soldiers pulled the 37-year-old out of the minibus and laid him on the road beside the bodies of his friends. He was sent home without being questioned.

Inn Black adds: Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, is to visit the controversial Far Hama settlement in Arab East Jerusalem next week to underline Britain's opposition to settlement in occupied Palestinian territories.

Mr Cook, flying to Cairo on Sunday at the start of a Middle East tour, is to confer with European Union colleagues in Edinburgh tomorrow on how best to revive the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

He is calling on Israel to make "substantial, credible and verifiable" troop redeployments in the West Bank and on the Palestinians to meet their security commitments.

Mr Cook argues that quiet diplomacy has already produced results — including Mr Wei's release and the promise that the Human Rights High Commissioner, Mary Robinson, will visit China.

Mr Cook said he was too busy to meet Mr Wei in January — before he visited China — but agreed to see him now. The Foreign Office said there

was a misunderstanding of the timing of yesterday's interview, which led to cancellation of a photocall, but that the meeting had been "friendly and amiable".

Mr Wei says that the Foreign Secretary offered no adequate explanation for the shift of policy in Geneva and did not wish to be photographed side by side.

Mr Hague accused the Foreign Secretary of posing unconvincedly as an "ethics man". In the Commons, he quoted Mr Wei, whom he met this week, as saying that the Government's position had "left victims in the lurch".

He says that in 18 years in prison in China his conditions were only improved when the international community signed declarations of this kind. Since the Foreign Secretary said that human rights would be at the heart of an ethical foreign policy, shouldn't the Prime Minister now reconsider this decision?

Mr Blair said: "Not merely have we raised human rights issues in respect of China continually, we have also, as president of the EU, been getting support from other European countries in order to make the very issues that are at the heart of Mr Wei's case clear to the Chinese government. But we did not feel that this UN resolution was the right way to proceed."

China's new premier, Zhu Rongji, is expected to visit London this month for the second Asia-Europe meeting.

Dissident still stirs politicians — ours

John Gittings and Anna Perkins

A MEETING yesterday between the leading Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng and Robin Cook turned sour when Mr Wei accused the Foreign Secretary of keeping him away from the press.

And Mr Wei's views were quoted in a sharp exchange in the House of Commons between the Prime Minister and the Conservative Party leader.

Tony Blair defended Britain's decision to withdraw support for a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights resolution criticising China: he said it was "not the right way to proceed". But he insisted that Britain would continue raising the issue of human rights abuses. William Hague condemned the shift, and said that Mr Wei had called the decision "quite stupefying".

Critics of British policy argue that with Hong Kong out of London's hands, Britain is now deliberately wooing Beijing by toning down criticism.

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He says that in 18 years in prison in China his conditions were only improved when the international community signed declarations of this kind. Since the Foreign Secretary said that human rights would be at the heart of an ethical foreign policy, shouldn't the Prime Minister now reconsider this decision?

Mr Blair said: "Not merely have we raised human rights issues in respect of China continually, we have also, as president of the EU, been getting support from other European countries in order to make the very issues that are at the heart of Mr Wei's case clear to the Chinese government. But we did not feel that this UN resolution was the right way to proceed."

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Serb offer of talks cuts little ice with Kosovo Albanians

Jonathan Steele in London and Martin Walker in Brussels

THE Serbian government has offered to hold open-ended talks with Albanian political parties in Kosovo in a bid to defuse the tension caused by last week's fierce police crackdown on armed units of the province's independence movement.

Responding to the Contact Group's ultimatum to Serbia to open a dialogue within 10 days or face tighter sanctions, the Belgrade authorities invited "responsible" ethnic Albanian representatives to meet them to "resolve all concrete issues".

The belated Serb initiative was designed to put the Albanians on the diplomatic defensive after Robert Gelbard, the US envoy, had told Ibrahim Rugova, their best-known leader, that the West could not support independence for Kosovo, a province in southern Serbia whose population consists mainly of ethnic Albanians.

Mr Gelbard flew to the area on Monday from London, where the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Italy — five of the six members of the Contact Group — approved a series of sanctions on Yugoslavia and threatened more if no progress was made. Russia went along with some of the measures, pending a visit to Belgrade by the

Russian foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov, next week.

Western sources said Mr Gelbard warned Kosovo's Albanian politicians that there was no alternative to compromise with the Yugoslav president and Serb strongman, Slobodan Milosevic.

But Mr Rugova told a press conference in Pristina that Kosovo should be made an international protectorate until it succeeded. His statement appeared to reject the Serbian offer of talks.

"An independent Kosovo would be the best solution for the region"

"I insist that the best, the optimal and most viable solution and the best for the region and the neighbouring countries — Albania, Serbia, Macedonia and the rest — would be an independent Kosovo with all guarantees for the local Serb community and Serb interests in Kosovo," he said.

The Kosovar Albanians are planning to hold elections on March 22, and no leader can afford to look soft in a highly-charged political situation in which the radicals are making all the running.

In Prekaz, the main village hit by last week's violence,

ethnic Albanians defiantly unearthed the bodies which Serb authorities had buried on Tuesday. They rearranged the heads to look eastward according to Muslim custom and reburied them.

In Brussels Nato deflected Albania's appeal for peace-keeping forces but the alliance's secretary-general, Javier Solana, is to fly to Albania today to symbolise Nato's readiness to send all help short of troops.

Nato, which shrinks from another open-ended military commitment while the Bosnian mission keeps being extended, plans financial and logistic support to help Albania cope with refugees from Kosovo.

Nato will also modify its military partnership agreement with Albania to help with border control and "will continue to assist Albania with the restructuring of its armed forces in order to defend its territory", Mr Solana said.

Under the formula "neither the status quo nor independence", Nato, the European Union and the United Nations are urging the restoration of Kosovo's pre-1989 autonomy.

The Serb government has offered to let the Red Cross hold an inquiry into claims that last week's violence, in which at least 80 Kosovans died, was deliberately aimed at civilians. But the Red Cross yesterday withdrew its officials, saying they had received anonymous death threats.

But in the wooded valleys and steep green fields of central France, among crumbling farmhouses up muddy tracks and old stone villages where net curtains twitch when a strange dog walks up the main street, the first lady of France is making history.

Far from her usual round of summits and state visits, Bernadette Chirac is, to the best of anyone's knowledge, the first wife of a Western head of state to be fighting her own election campaign.



An Albanian in Prekaz, Kosovo, digs up the coffin of a victim of the police crackdown. The bodies were reburied with Muslim rites

Elusive first lady with the common touch

Jon Henley in Corrèze intrudes on the rural campaign trail of councillor Bernadette Chirac, wife of the more famous Jacques

"NO FOREIGN journalists," her spokesman in Corrèze, a small town of 1,800, said firmly. "She doesn't want any. You must understand, it's a small place and she knows everyone — it's coffee at one house, lunch at another. She doesn't want them upset."

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She has been the equivalent of county councillor for her rural constituency — a few scattered hamlets, total population 3,800 — for 18 years. But that was when husband Jacques, former prime minister and mayor of Paris, was the local MP. Now he is president.

Mrs Chirac still does not want any journalists tagging along on her campaign for reelection on Sunday, when France votes for regional and departmental councils.

"This is a small community and we don't want hordes of cameras following her round," said Yvonne, the florist. "She's popular, she works hard, she's got us a swimming pool, new bus shelter, all sorts of things. But look out for her — she's got a red Peugeot."

Martial the mechanic had not seen the red Peugeot today. "Of course she'll win again, probably in the first round," he said. "She's local and we like her."

In fact, Mrs Chirac is not local at all. But she married an ambitious young man with local roots and, in the early 1970s, soon after he was first elected MP, they bought a fine 16th-century chateau below the nearby hamlet of Surran.

Mrs Chirac, aged 64, has based her campaign there since mid-January.

"She's done a lot to get to know local people," said Gilles, who runs Sarran's only shop. "It didn't come naturally to her. She remembers things, sick relatives. I don't agree with her politically, but, honestly, she does it well."

Mrs Chirac represents the Gaullist RPR party her husband founded, but her campaign — her last, she says — is not much about politics.

"She's interested in things like making sure old people can be looked after at home," said Hubert, a sprightly 92. "Keeping the buses going, the roads in good order."

Pierre Vant, the Socialist candidate for councillor, is resigned to defeat. "Last time she got 64 per cent of the vote, the time before 60 per cent," he said. "And now she's first lady."

And she has clout. For the first time, the Tour de France, that huge national summer obsession, will come through Corrèze this year — thanks to a phone call from Bernadette to the organiser.

André, standing on the steps of his farmhouse in muddy boots and overalls, said: "That business about the Tour — that's why she'll win. She cares about Corrèze."

● Jean-Marie Le Pen, the leader of France's far-right National Front, hinted yesterday that his supporters would take the law into their own hands if he is convicted of assaulting a Socialist woman politician and barred from public office. A verdict is due on April 2 on allegations that he roughed up Annette Penval during last summer's election campaign.

Bernadette Chirac: "She's popular, she works hard"

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John Hooper in Rome

MANY of Italy's museums and galleries are to remain open for 13 hours a day: the latest attempt to make the country's cultural treasures more accessible to both Italians and foreigners.

The arts minister, Walter Veltroni, announced yesterday that 16 state-run premises would be kept open all year from 9am until 10pm. They include the Uffizi in Florence, the National Gallery of Modern

Art, the Accademia in Venice and Rome's Villa Borghese. The new hours will take effect on April 7.

"No other country can offer such initiatives," Mr Veltroni said. "This puts Italy in the vanguard."

Visitors who still encounter poor facilities at many sites might raise an eyebrow at his claim. But there is no doubt that Mr Veltroni, who is also deputy prime minister, has made a big difference since taking over arts and heritage two years ago.

His biggest success was to

hulky officials into reopening the Borghese Gallery in Rome last June. The gallery had been closed for more than 13 years, hiding from view masterpieces by artists such as Raphael, Titian and Caravaggio.

He has also overseen the revocation of an 1863 law that was among the prime reasons for the lengthy queues in which tourists swelter outside museums and galleries each summer.

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Colombian army counts cost of defeat

Jeremy Lennard in Bogotá
sees the rebels gaining ground

AS OFFICIALS counted votes from last Sunday's congressional elections, the Colombian military was counting corpses after its worst defeat in the country's 35-year internal conflict.

Up to 83 members of the 3rd Mobile Brigade — the army's elite anti-terrorist force — were killed last week, 30 were injured and 27 were taken hostage in battles with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc), the country's most powerful guerrilla group.

Fighting flared as the army tried to move into the coca-growing jungle region of Caquetá and prevent a repeal of the disruption which reduced last October's municipal elections to a sham in areas dominated by 40 guerrillas and 30 civilians are said to have been killed.

Alfredo Rangel, the former national security adviser to President Ernesto Samper, called the debacle "without doubt the army's worst catastrophe". As the country prepares for presidential elections in May, there are fears that the armed forces may be unable to prevent the Farc and other rebel groups riding roughshod over the democratic process.

In the run up to last October's poll, the guerrillas' campaign of kidnapping and intimidation left 30 local officials dead, and nearly 2,000 candidates withdrew.

Voter turnout in many rural areas was less than 10 per cent. Last week the Farc showed it could disrupt regional energy supplies, ambush army patrols and control key roads on the edge of regional cities. In Caquetá it displayed the military strength to repel Colombia's most highly trained troops.

The army has come under repeated criticism in the past two years. In August 1996 rebels stormed the jungle outpost at Las Delicias, killing 28 soldiers and taking 60 others

hostage for 10 months. Last December the Farc ambushed troops manning a mountain-top post in Patascoy, killing 10 and kidnapping 15 others.

The overpowering of the 3rd Mobile Brigade has brought calls for radical reform of military strategy. Mr Rangel said the gulf was widening between an organised, disciplined guerrilla force with clear strategies and a demoralised, under-trained army.

One former officer, who did not want to be named, said recent defeats had been the result of such basic faults as being untrained in jungle combat, sending in troops without back-up, inadequate intelligence gathering and underestimating the rebel threat.

"Once a soldier makes officer status, his progress further up the ranks has much more to do with political affiliations than military skill," he added.

The criticism comes at a sensitive time for the army, which is also increasingly accused of collaborating with rightwing paramilitaries. In the past such talk has met with blunt denials. But then evidence emerged that a band of paramilitaries were flown in and cleared through a military-controlled airport before massacring 40 civilians in Mapiripan last year. A serving officer was arrested last month for his paramilitary links, as were three former members of the 20th Intelligence Brigade for their role in the 1995 assassination of a leading opposition figure, Álvaro Gómez.

The president urged his troops to avenge what he described as "the serious blow" suffered in Caquetá. But Antonio Navarro Wolff, a former guerrilla leader and now congress member, said sweeping changes in the military were needed if the armed forces commander General Manuel José Bonett was to regain the upper hand and repair the tarnished image and morale.



The family of a soldier killed in combat with leftwing Farc rebels last week grieve as his coffin arrives at Bogotá airport

PHOTOGRAPH: HENRY ROMERO

Clinton's Buddy faces unkindest cut of all

Martin Kettle in Washington

THERE is not much chance of a sexual relationship at the White House for Bill Clinton's best friend: the president has decided to have his dog Buddy neutered.

A White House spokesman has confirmed that Mr Clinton "is inclined" to let his seven-month-old Labrador go under the knife, three months after the actress Doris Day urged the president to set an example to other pet owners by having the deed done.



to have set no date for the surgery, leading to speculation that he doesn't really have the heart for it.

dog's age". The Humane Society of the United States, the country's largest animal protection group, said Mr Clinton was doing the right thing by his dog.

"Neutering or spaying dogs and cats is one of the most important acts a responsible pet owner can take," Martha Armstrong, a vice-president, said. "It promotes better physical and behavioural health for dogs and cats and it helps to address the pet overpopulation crisis."

Buddy last appeared in public with Mr Clinton on Tuesday, apparently un-

aware of his prospective loss as he played fetch with a tennis ball on the south lawn.

Miss Day, aged 73, who is president of the Doris Day Animal League, wrote to Mr Clinton in December expressing concern that Buddy could suffer health problems such as testicular cancer and prostate infections if he remained intact.

At the time Mr McCurry said there were no plans to neuter Buddy. But Mr Clinton's physician Connie Mariano recently wrote to the former Hollywood star saying the dog had been cast out to get me all along."

CARTOON: DEERING

Lost bones rattle boffins

Christopher Reed
in Los Angeles

THE last time the archaeologist Jim Chatters saw the 9,300-year-old skeleton of Kennewick Man the thigh bones were definitely connected to the hip bones. But the mystery of the missing fragments is now embarrassing the United States army.

Their disappearance has increased the recriminations in an already bitter argument over who were the earliest inhabitants on the North American continent, an issue that has renewed hostility between American Indians and the white man.

The skeleton was found beside a Columbia river bank near the small town of Kennewick, Washington state, in July 1996. Scientists were astonished to discover that the skull was Caucasoid, not Mongoloid, the characteristic of people now referred to as native Americans or Indians. It suggested that the first settlers may have been European.

Their conclusions brought an immediate reaction from the Umatilla Indians who live near Kennewick. They claimed the bones for burial under a 1990 law. K-man was confiscated and has been in the protection of the Army Corps of Engineers, which has responsibility for inland waterways.

So who took the missing pieces? The corps agrees that five days after Chatters surrendered the bones, in September 1996, Umatilla observers noticed the missing pieces.

This week it reported officially that a comparison of Dr Chatters' inventory and another by the corps last month showed that femur fragments had vanished, although the corps has denied losing the pieces.

The federal courts have been informed, because a judge has been handling the dispute over the bones since eight scientists filed a law suit reclaiming the skeleton.

Dr Chatters has his own doubts. "Who was the Umatilla who saw the missing pieces and was trained to know what they were — and is he the one who has been out to get me all along?"

Turkey turns on Europe

Ankara fans flames in row with Kohl

Ian Traynor in Bonn

RELATIONS between Germany and Turkey, two key European Nato allies, plunged to a fresh low yesterday when Ankara renewed its attacks on Chancellor Helmut Kohl, having already angered him by comparing his policies to the Nazis.

The Turkish prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, who last week accused Bonn of continuing Adolf Hitler's policy of pursuing *Lebensraum* in Germany's east and central European "strategic backyard", levelled several further accusations.

He said Mr Kohl had masterminded the European Union's rejection of Turkey's membership ambitions. "Imposed" the EU border on Turkey's western frontier and fought to keep the EU a "Christian club". Turkey is boycotting an EU summit with east European aspirants in London today, designed to placate Ankara after its summary rejection from the EU waiting room.

Karl Lamers, a foreign policy adviser to Mr Kohl, described last week's attack from Ankara as proof that Turkey was not fit to join the EU. In an interview published in Germany this morning, the prime minister of Luxembourg, Jean-Claude Juncker, was also seen as a confidant of Mr Kohl, said Mr Yilmaz's remarks were "unbearable".

'The German government is the architect of the discrimination'

He said: "If Turkey wants to be accepted into the EU, it has first to respect the rules that apply to all."

The German government has reacted with uncharacteristic robustness to Turkey's accusation that Mr Kohl is spearheading the EU's expansion into post-communist eastern Europe to entrench German influence in the region.

But Mr Yilmaz remained unshaken. He told German journalists in Ankara that Bonn was responsible for "unbearable delaying tactics" in relation to Turkey's EU aspirations.

Referring to attitudes in the EU, he said: "The German government is the architect of the discrimination."

"We need the necessary certainty if the EU agrees with these borders imposed by Bonn."

He added: "We also want to know whether the EU, as expressed by Helmut Kohl, is to be a project of Christian civilisation excluding Turkey."

There are well over 2 million Turks living in Germany, by far the highest ethnic minority, and many are second and third generation immigrants born and raised in Germany.

Last December's EU summit in Luxembourg excluded Turkey from the list of countries starting accession talks now and in the next wave.

Mr Yilmaz said he had concluded from the December decision that Mr Kohl was motivated by bigotry, and that he had refused to join the EU on religious grounds. Germany was making a strategic mistake and Turkey was being made to suffer for that error, he added.



Turkish public-sector workers were on the streets of Ankara again yesterday in protest at a union law being considered by parliament which they say threatens their right to strike and to collective bargaining

PHOTOGRAPH: TARIK IMAZAY

valued by bigotry, and that he had refused to join the EU on religious grounds. Germany was making a strategic mistake and Turkey was being made to suffer for that error, he added.

A meeting of European Christian Democrats in Brussels a year ago, which was led by Mr Kohl, issued a sudden surprise snub to Ankara's EU ambitions, stating baldly that Turkey could not hope to join

the union, despite 35 years of talks and various accords ever since.

Bonn's approach has particularly incensed the Americans, who regard Turkey as a key strategic asset on Nato's south-eastern flank.

Relations have been fraught since. Bonn's approach has particularly incensed the Americans, who regard Turkey as a key strategic asset on Nato's south-eastern flank.

Turkish court throws out charges of police torture

Chris Morris in Ankara

ACOURT in Turkey dismissed accusations of torture against 10 policemen yesterday in a human rights case monitored by international pressure groups and European governments demanding evidence that Turkey is determined to stamp out police brutality.

The policemen were accused of torturing 14 students at the security headquarters in the south-western town of Manisa in 1995. Despite medical evidence by a local MP, the court ruled that there was insufficient evidence to proceed with the case.

The students, who were detained on suspicion of belonging to an illegal leftwing group, say they were sprayed with high pressure hoses, sexually assaulted and given electric shocks to force them to confess.

The students' lawyers say they will take their case to the court of appeal.

Greeks threaten to derail EU talks

Helena Smith in Athens

GREECE will tell the European Conference today that it will block the European Union enlargement process if Cyprus is not allowed to join the 15 nation bloc.

Costas Simitis, the Greek prime minister, said: "Cyprus's accession constitutes part of the overall policy of the EU's enlargement. Its entry is irrespective of a solution [to its division with Turkey] and cannot be delayed."

The island is due to enter membership talks on March 31, along with Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Hungary.

Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot president, told the Guardian that Greece would use its veto if

Cyprus's application was treated differently to those of the five other hopefuls. "Greece will act if Cyprus is treated unfairly," he said.

Concern at Cyprus's application is increasing. The island has been unofficially partitioned since 1974, when Turkey seized the northern third. Several EU states oppose the "import of a conflict" into their ranks. France says the accession talks should be stalled until Cyprus's Greek and Turkish communities have bridged their differences enough to agree on a joint EU negotiating team.

Mr Clerides said he would present the EU's British presidency with a very generous proposal for the Turkish Cypriots to take part in the accession talks — without accepting their state as an entity. Many believe the pro-



Clerides: 'generous proposal'

pect of EU membership could help the stalled United Nations-sponsored peace talks to reunite the island in a loose "bizonal, bicomunal federation". "The process of joining the EU can help to solve the Cyprus problem considerably because it should pacify

the fears and anxieties that both communities have for the future," Mr Clerides said.

"EU membership will pacify the Turkish Cypriots' fear of being overrun and reduced to third-class citizens by us, the majority population. It will also pacify the Greek Cypriots' fear of the Turkish Cypriots being used as a bridgehead by Turkey to occupy the whole of the island."

Rauf Denktaş, the Turkish Cypriot leader, has ruled out joining the talks until the self-proclaimed republic is acknowledged by the Greek Cypriots.

Downing Street said yesterday that it wanted no hold-up in Cyprus's membership talks, despite the French doubts. A spokesman for Tony Blair planned to meet Mr Clerides last night. — Reuters.

education

Every Tuesday in the

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Comment

Diary

Matthew Norman

PUBLIC relations wizard that he is, Richard Branson has conceived a masterpiece to assuage passengers on his famously unpunctual railway trains. A colleague reports travelling from Coventry to Euston (or to clarify, London Euston) last Saturday in a "weekend first" carriage, and was impressed by the brochure on the table, which was advertising not only the goods available in the buffet, but also a "complimentary refill" of tea and coffee. Very American, and very generous. Hats off to Richard. My colleague bought tea for himself and his 14-year-old son Alex, and when Alex had finished his, he wandered off to the buffet for his free refill. "Where's your teabag?" asked the steward. "Er, I'm afraid I threw it away." "Sorry," replied the steward, "you only get a refill if you keep your original teabag." Could you make it up? I think it's unlikely.

THE campaign to raise the profile of Andrew Smith, the preternaturally obscure employment minister, gathers pace. David Lewis, a constituent of Andrew's in Oxford, e-mails with the following facts: 1) He listens to comments at meetings and makes careful notes. 2) He answers letters politely and meticulously. 3) He works at and knows all about his subject. 4) He lives in Oxford in a working-class housing estate where many people are too afraid, or too snobby, to enter. "If this is boring," David concludes, "then give me a boring MP, any time." Thanks to David for that. More please.

FOLLOWING the report here that Charles Bronson, vibrantly bearded pleasure of Her Majesty, has recorded it's a Wonderful World, there is news that his predecessor as Britain's most dangerous man has also moved into music. Mad Frankie Fraser has recorded an album with Bristol-based rapper Tricky. Also on the album is the Great Train Robber Tommy Wisbey — father of Mad's girlfriend Marilyn — and one-time Kray benchmark Tony Lambrianon, a man who can look at himself in the mirror when he goes to bed at night. Charlie and Mad have so much in common — both cite taking a prison governor hostage among their happiest memories — that an album of duets, doubtless to be called Jailhouse Rock, may soon be arranged.

IAM indebted to the city diarist of the Telegraph for news of Luke Johnson, fruit of Paul's same and rational loins. My fiscal so-called rival reports that Luke, who runs Plaza Express, recently wrote a savage polemic against the venture-capital industry. He was therefore surprised, he says, to find, in the miniprospectus of Elders Street Downing Capital Trust, the name of a certain Luke Johnson listed among the directors. "I suppose I could be accused of hypocrisy," says Luke. No doubts about the paternity there, then.

CARDIFF constable Nick Lody wins a nomination for March's PC Brain after striking a deal with a drunk man who was driving the entire nick crazy one night with rancorous singing. Nick went to the cell, and offered to light his fag in exchange for his silence. The man agreed, but insisted he be allowed one final song. The deal was struck, and Nick went back to his desk. As he sat down, the strains of the prisoner's grand finale drifted from the cell. "One million green bottles," he sang, "hanging on the wall..."

I WISH I COULD REMEMBER WHAT I SAID AT MARY'S LEAVING DO...
WELTHER TON GREENLY



It was a terrible thing to release Roisin McAliskey — but it was necessary

Hugo Young



THE release of Roisin McAliskey is a deep perversion of the course of justice, one more deformity that Northern Ireland has worked upon the British state. After painstaking investigation, enough evidence was collected to persuade a magistrate that Ms McAliskey should be extradited to Germany, to stand trial for her part in an IRA bombing attack on a British Army base. But now she is set free, a shocking development engineered not by the courts but by the British Home Secretary.

This is a multiple insult to the legal order. Ms McAliskey, admittedly, is in uncertain health, and has been held in custody for some time. But the case is very serious, and the process of extradition is precisely the same as the one the British have often sought to implement in the American courts, only to be enraged by what looks like the political obstinacy of the judges. Here we have an intervention that doesn't even hide behind the pretence of due process.

Nor is Jack Straw's reasoning any more satisfactory than his decision. He has statutory power to revoke an extradition which might be "unjust or oppressive", but the only injustice here is to the judicial system itself, with a sidelong crack at the German version of it. As for oppressive, there are asylum-seekers every week, innocent of any criminal suspicion, who are deported by the Home Office without a backward glance at the question of oppression.

What Mr Straw has done is succumb to political pressure. The McAliskey case became a juicy cause célèbre for Irish-American lobbyists, and then came to be defined by the Nationalist side of the peace

process as a pressure-point that might bear fruit for them. As an unnamed official from the Northern Ireland Office told the Telegraph: "This young lady's continued imprisonment could hinder the chances of keeping republicans on parole." There could be no more blatant illustration of how British standards have collapsed under pressure from expediency.

So yes, this is a perversion. It should not be happening, and it shouldn't be defended in the courts. The McAliskey crowd an excuse to represent her as some kind of oppressed innocent. But then there are a lot of perversions at large in Northern Ireland. It's a place where the Queensbury Rules have long since ceased to apply in any arena outside, possibly, the boxing ring.

Some of the broken rules concern accountability for the vast reserves of public money poured into the province. The other day, the Guardian reported a scandalous compilation of funds that were creamed off the sale of Belfast airport, and other pieces of "community" funding that seem to have found their way into civil servants' pockets: a story whose publication was exceeded in shock-effect only by the fact of its non-publication for months before, until dug out by my tenacious colleague, David Hencke. Not only does Northern Ireland break the rules, it long ago rendered torpid the usual British vigilance towards breaches in the standards of governance.

Perversion of the norm will be seen today, when Gerry Adams is again received in Downing Street. The moral as well as the legal order is offended by the presence, at the Prime Minister's side, of the head of an organisation with

wholly-owned terrorist links, who cannot yet credibly renounce violence, and who is purringly propitiated by the government in Dublin. The brisk walk-back by Gary McMichael, the Ulster Democratic Party leader, after being briefly penalised for loyalist killings his party admitted, was just as nauseating.

But nausea is something the British will have to put up with: and the truth is that few of them will experience the sensation anyway. For the greatest perversion of all is the condition of unease in Northern Ireland. By their willingness to countenance any number of aberrant breaches of the legal order, whether by the Home Secretary or the Prime Minister, the British are showing that these blatant offences are acceptable. I would say that, even by the rules of moral logic, this end justifies these particular means, and that the Tory Party, the only voices to be heard in dissent, are once again in retreat from the real, regrettable world.

WHETHER the end will be reached is another matter. Though Mr Mowlem is obliged to be an optimist, it's hard to share his confidence. While Gerry Adams showed serious leadership at the weekend, acknowledging that any interim settlement, at least, would have to be partial, there has yet to be a matching concession from David Trimble. It will have to come, in some form, if the process is to accelerate, as both London and Dublin desperately want, towards a conclusion by Easter. But even if we assume a measure of acquiescent statismanship by all leaders in the end-game, their ability to sell their people on concessions, in the crucial cross-border strud

of the process, is hard to believe in.

Never far from the scene are the usual culpability manoeuvres. Almost as important to these politicians as the securing of a deal, however messy, is the need to ensure the other side can be blamed when it doesn't happen. For many of them the blame game is actually more important: a fact that could be said to epitomise the tragedy of the last three decades. Have they got past that stage? Is Mr Trimble prepared to make it even slightly simpler for Mr Adams to ease his people towards renunciation? Will Dublin have the nerve fully to abandon its constitutional claim? Can Adams at least acquiesce in majority consent?

These huge and ancient questions are what the peace process, with all its creative, modern subtlety, will soon have to face. The language must be serpentine but the answers cannot but be indicative. The optimists like Dr Mowlem believe that the momentum is carrying the participants, for the first time, towards an outcome: that the process is the process, and simply must end positively because it cannot be repeated.

Maybe. But what at least is admirable is that London has measured up. This Government, unlike the last one, was free to give it everything it's got, and did so. After years of futile effort within the moral and legal order, we've negotiated with terrorism, revoked an extradition and doubtless done many other unfashionable things. We owed this to Ulster, to avoid the great darkness that will otherwise descend. For that, terrifyingly, is what will happen if, after all these concessions to Irish requirements, the leaders do not repay the British sacrifice.

Brown not green

George Monbiot



SELDOM do the poor do more to subsidise the rich than when they bear the costs of environmental neglect. Take transport, for example. A study released a month ago by the British Lung Foundation suggests that motorists pay the exchequer only one third of what they cost the nation. They spend less than they did 20 years ago, new Government figures tell us, while rail users pay 71 per cent more.

The poor, who, lacking capital, cannot afford to travel cheaply, are hammered again and again. Children in social class 5, according to Great Ormond Street Hospital, are five times as likely to be hit by a car as children in social class 1. It is the poor who live beside the motorway and under the flyover: they are the ones most likely to feature among the 24,000 people a year whose deaths, the health secretary tells us, are hastened by air pollution.

Any government committed to social justice would seek to ensure that the rich support the poor, rather than the other way around, and Labour knows what this entails. This is why Tony Blair promised that he would place the environment at the heart of policy, and Gordon Brown announced the economic development must be consistent with environmental protection. If you still require evidence that the Government's concern for social justice is merely spin-deep, you need look no further than the systematic abandonment of its environmental pledges.

THE backsliding began the moment it took office. The Birmingham Northern Relief Road and the Cardiff Bay Barrage, both of which it exorcised as roaring white elephants in opposition, were approved, in east London, the Government began planning the biggest encroachment on a site of special scientific interest in history, with its scheme to turn part of Rainham Marshes into a petrol station and drive-through restaurant. When environmentalists complained, they were told to wait for the budget, when they would see that the Government meant business. They waited, and now they are staggered by what they see.

The House of Commons environmental audit committee has dedicated its first report to analysing Gordon Brown's pre-budget statement. Its conclusions are damning. There was no evidence, it found, of a strategic approach to environ-

mental taxation. There was no information about the impact of economic activity on the environment.

Gordon Brown, it seems, will add just one percentage point to the annual petrol tax the Tories had proposed, even though petrol prices have fallen in real terms by 7.5 per cent since 1974. The money will not be earmarked for public transport. There will be no new provision for the clean-up of contaminated urban land. But the most spectacular omission concerns our most obvious social and environmental injustice: Britain's failure to reduce its need for household fuel.

For years, Labour front-benchers have been promising to retract the anomaly which ensures that saving energy costs more than using it. VAT on fuel consumption stands at 5 per cent; VAT on fuel conservation — insulation, double glazing and thermostats, for example — is charged at 17.5 per cent. Labour has never doubted that this arrangement is absurd: in 1996, Dawn Primarolo, now financial secretary at the Treasury, argued passionately that the two rates should be equalised, "in the name of justice, jobs, democracy and energy efficiency". She's right: every winter, more than 30,000 elderly people pay for the means of their department with their lives. They die of cold because their homes aren't fit to live in.

It hardly seems necessary

Every winter, 30,000 people pay for this meanness with their lives

to tell you what comes next. The Government's commitment to reform has been diluted until just 40,000 of the 8 million households deemed to suffer from "fuel poverty" will benefit. As fuel prices plummet, the rest of us will be driven by a financial incentive to become still more wasteful. John Prescott, whose virtuous performance at the Kyoto climate talks so impressed environmentalists, could have saved his breath.

The Government, Ms Primarolo now explains, can't implement a full tax cut because European law forbids it. Yet Belgium did just this in 1995, and hasn't faced a legal challenge. Her claim is simply another stolen Tory policy: if you don't want to do something, such as foregoing an annual £40 million of revenue, blame Europe.

This budget will shatter any residual hopes that the Government is committed to environmental protection. It will leave John Prescott, Michael Meacher, Gavin Strang, Theresa Jones and the other ministers who have made such bold environmental promises squirming. The Government will not turn green, but resolutely Brown. And the poor, as always, will pick up the bill.

The father of a little girl is outraged at a bureaucratic nightmare

Kill the CSA now

Anon

"YOUR record of events is completely wrong. I enclose a copy of a letter I sent you and a copy of your response. That response prompted me to telephone your office, as my notes on it indicate. I spoke first with a Ms [name of official], who transferred me to a Mr [another official]. He blamed your all-too-apparent confusion on a 'mail build-up' and on the fact that the person who had been dealing with my case had been transferred..."

That was my most recent letter to the Child Support Agency; and I would thank god if it were to be the last. During more than three years of mind-numbing frustration with the agency, I'd often sworn that I'd never communicate with it again. Then I'd find myself drawn

into another round of interminable form-filling, unanswered letters, almost benign telephone conversations to no lasting effect and then more resentment at an unnecessary intrusion into my private life.

Worst of all, there was the side effect of an increasingly fractious relationship with my former partner. She had started the CSA ball rolling and insisted on keeping it going, and there was the prospect of not seeing my young daughter again if things got out of hand.

The agency ought to be closed down, not merely reformed, as the Government is apparently promising to do. Yesterday, the findings of the public accounts committee appeared. Its chairman said the CSA's confusion, delay and errors were "frankly appalling", and the agency "is failing the children and families it was designed to protect". After so many damning

reports, the only surprise is that it has survived so long — almost five years. Labour should revoke the agency of the nastiest excesses of Thatcherism. Now the Government has a great opportunity to create a service that puts the welfare of children at its heart rather than a desire to reduce the social security budget at all costs.

THAT letter of mine was typical of my later correspondence with the agency. It concluded: "For nearly three years I've been seeking to challenge your claim. For more than two years, I've been waiting for you to amend your assessment. For well over a year, I paid your assessment under protest on the understanding that you were investigating my changed circumstances. Now you want more money, and I've had enough."

To turn abject failure into success, the Government must appreciate what made

the CSA so bad. Baroness Hollis, the social security minister, was wrong to proclaim that the agency's problems are with "bad legislation, not bad staff". In fact, the whole set-up is completely misguided.

The problem with the CSA is that it combines the worst aspects of the court system it replaced. The agency is largely anonymous and bureaucratic; it exchanged arcane rituals for ridiculously complex and, for many, incomprehensible formulae for calculating payments; it quickly deteriorated into a penalising institution, (which many of the CSA employees in a TV documentary last year clearly relished); it is uninterested in individual circumstances, eager only to impose a set of rules; and it is reluctant to compromise — it is right and you are wrong. To this noxious brew, the CSA added one particularly pungent catalyst of its



own. The agency combined the role of revenue earner for the social security department with that of arbiter in the emotionally-charged atmosphere extending between estranged parents. Such a marriage of convenience was never going to work.

All these issues need to be addressed, plus one innovation that could save Lady Hollis a lot of trouble, and prevent any new service from going the way of the CSA. She could start from the premise that even estranged parents do want to support their children. With this in mind, there should be some onus on the claimant with care of the children to show that the estranged parent is unwilling to provide support. Otherwise, however well intentioned the new service might be, its involvement will be resented and, like the CSA, it will fall... but not before another little girl stops seeing her father.

Guardian

Prescott the problem

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Brown not
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Prescott not the problem

Local government is

LIKE so many alleged scandals these days, the swirl of claim and counter-claim surrounding John Prescott has become impossibly complicated. The Deputy Prime Minister should count this as a blessing, since only those with a formidable head for detail can have any clear idea what it's all about. Most of us will probably tune out — until an accusation surfaces that we can all understand. In the meantime, there is some genuine muck — buried under the mountain of accusations, old bank statements and alleged break-ins. It is a real scandal, but on the latest evidence it has little to do with John Prescott — and everything to do with British local government.

First, it's worth picking through the thicket of claims amassed against the Deputy PM. There are three areas of dispute. The first relates to the £27,750 donation Mr Prescott received from the Rowntree Trust. He should have declared that in the register of members' interests, but didn't — apparently because he had transferred the cash into a blind trust. Under Sir Gordon Downey's anti-sleaze rules, contributions to blind trusts don't have to be declared — so Mr Prescott is technically in the clear. In the current sleaze-sensitive climate, he should have played ultra-safe and declared the money. But it's hard to see him as guilty of much more than an oversight.

The other two claims centre on alleged dodgy dealing in housing policy in Hull. There is disquiet over the demolition of 630 council houses on the Gypsyville estate

— part of a redevelopment undertaken by the council and a private company. Local residents say the deal was fixed in secret by the power-brokers of the Labour-controlled housing committee. They object that only one company was ever in the running for the contract, and that it was never subject to the competitive tendering. That's bad news — and a similar scheme in Doncaster was condemned for "doubtful legality" by the district auditor — but it has next to nothing to do with John Prescott. The only link is the MP's long-held support for public-private ventures of this kind. A cloud cast over a favoured policy may be unfortunate, but it is no scandal.

The final accusation is the most serious. Mr Prescott's enemies say he allowed a housing trust to do a lucrative deal with a company part-owned by his son. The North Hull Housing Action Trust — whose vice-chairman, John Black, is a Prescott chum — sold more than 25 homes at knockdown prices to Wyke Property Services — 20 per cent owned by Jonathan Prescott. As a quango the trust comes under the Department of Environment, headed by John Prescott. These facts can be constructed to look like three men, all closely connected, doing each other a slightly dodgy favour. But there is no firm evidence of that, and the Deputy Prime Minister has done the right thing by despatching a three-person team of auditors to go through the books. It would have been better if the investigators were from outside Mr Prescott's own department, but it is a good start.

Still, if there is little obvious dirt on Hull's MP, there is much that sticks to the city's ruling clique. As in so many of Britain's big cities, local government there has turned into a one-party state. Undisciplined by the pressures of competitive elections, too many party burghers have

grown arrogant and lazy with power. They have turned on each other, fighting personal vendettas rather than public-spirited campaigns. There are numerous possible remedies — from staggered, annual local elections to proportional representation, from directly elected mayors to powers of local taxation — all designed to make local leaders more visible, accountable and democratic. The decayed state of government in towns and cities is the real scandal — whatever the final truth about Mr Prescott.

Heading south

Vision is sometimes indivisible

THE bungling of the redevelopment of London's South Bank suggests the Government has reached its own glass ceiling. A level of vision higher than which it dare not go. This is not an intrinsically unaffordable project. Redevelopment of the South Bank costing £135 million — including covering it with a £15 million "wave of glass" — was agreed in 1993 when the Government's deficit was £42 billion. It is now being deferred when the Exchequer is heading for a budget surplus. It is a casualty of bureaucratic ineptitude, lack of planning and a change in the climate of lottery hand-outs from funding capital to buttressing revenue.

This is not metropolitan megalomania. The South Bank is one of the biggest concentrations of the arts anywhere. More than one-third of its 6 million visitors come from outside London and 18 million people live within an hour's car drive. It contains artistic jewels like the Royal Festival Hall, the National Theatre and the National Film Theatre (with the new Bankside Tate and Globe theatre nearby); yet nearly everyone

is put off by the shabby environment in which these gems exist. The wonderfully innovative Richard Rogers glass canopy would have warmed and landscaped the environment, tamed its brutalist excesses and created an inclusive space with more artistic activities and restaurants where people could linger instead of scurrying quickly home.

It has been obvious for ages that the £75 million originally expected from the capped resources of the Arts Council would not be forthcoming, but this doesn't mean it can't be afforded. The South Bank project is an urban development scheme, a boost for education and a heritage/millennium project as well as a contribution to the arts. Funding should come from lots of different sources (including the untapped crevices of the lottery) to mirror its many functions. It could even provide ongoing employment for the welfare-to-work project. Money could be channelled from future lottery streams — as long as it is guaranteed. If the Government, as mooted, counts what money is left as a result of its own myopia and uses it to build an apology for the original project with bolt-on commercial additions, it will have missed a unique chance to create something that could have been the envy of the world. Vision is sometimes indivisible.

A right to decide

That's what women want

GORDON BROWN has been thinking a lot about women this week. And so have we. The Chancellor's Budget on Tuesday has been heavily trailed as one which will address the needs of women and children in a radical and visionary way. As our panel

of women this week illustrated, there are no absolute answers. But what the exercise did offer was an opportunity to hear from a group of women who are not normally given a voice. The message, when we asked them about their lives and what the Government could do to help them, was — loud and clear — that they wanted choice. Choice! A small word, with big implications for the Government.

Choice is expensive, after all. If women choose to stay at home looking after their children, they may need support from the state. If women are to be encouraged back into the workplace after having children, the majority will need — and ought to have — subsidised childcare.

Twenty years ago women were fighting for the right to go out to work. The achievements have been considerable. The irony today is that some of the women we spoke to felt that they now had to fight to justify the right to stay at home. They feared — perhaps misguidedly — that the Government's plans could mean that that choice would be taken away from them.

These were ordinary women who wanted the option of staying at home — without being patronised for being just a mother, or criticised for sponging off the state. They wanted the choice, too, when they were ready, to go back to work, with access to affordable and reliable childcare and jobs that paid reasonable wages and offered flexible working hours.

This was not a call back to hearth and home by women. It was simply a plea to be heard and to have a say in their own lives: it's a battle that still has to be won. What the Chancellor must not lose sight of when he delivers his Budget to the Commons next week is the importance of what women really want, as opposed to what politicians think would be good for them.

Letters to the Editor

The full dope on drug tests

THE Prison Service claimed in your report about challenges to compulsory drug tests (Jail challenge to drug tests, March 2) that prisoners could have an independent test done. This is disingenuous because the prisoner is charged £175 for this "privilege". That represents 30 weeks' earnings. What prisoner can possibly afford that? And is that money returned if the independent test proves negative? I doubt it. P Russell, London.

WAS it just last week that new rules were outlined to prevent gazzumping? Now the Halifax is trying to gazzump Royal Bank of Scotland to buy Birmingham and Midlands building society (Halifax makes £780m play for Midlands, March 10). George Penabaz, Knaresborough, North Yorks.

THE graphics of your article on food labelling (When truth isn't part of the packet, March 10) implied that red wine should also be labelled — but all alcoholic drinks are specifically exempt from the existing regulations. Only non-alcoholic or low-alcohol drinks have to include a list of ingredients. This leads to the irrationality in the labelling of a can of shandy, one of the ingredients is listed as beer. Labelling should be extended to all beverages. Denis Bates, University of Wales.

NOTE that Vitall Vitalev has uncovered the disease which afflicts Murdoch's journalists and editors (Self-censorship is Murdoch's, March 11). It is clearly a cow form of BSE since he refers to "cow-towing editors and hacks". J Hampson, Thirsk, North Yorks.

Fathers in law - and deed

IT IS surely correct that unmarried fathers should be given the same rights over their children as married fathers (Irvine plans more parental rights for unmarried fathers, March 10; Fathers' day, March 11). With rights, however, come responsibility and the reality of parental responsibility is of taking an active and interested role in all aspects of a child's life. For many unmarried fathers, the lack of parental responsibility denies them this role and a change in the law will hopefully go some way to addressing the needs of men who have a genuine interest in their children's welfare.

But the needs of the child are paramount. Frankly, where one parent (often the mother) has been left "holding the baby", sometimes in difficult social and financial circumstances, the fact that the other partner does not have parental responsibility can be an advantage to the parent with custody, who is trying to provide a safe, stable and caring environment for a child.

I agree with Dave Hill that more effort and resources

should be put into counselling and where there are issues over custody and parental responsibility, there should be a statutory duty for both parents (whether married or not) to be party to a contract which outlines their individual rights. Ian Darbyshire, London.

I AM sick and tired of hearing about the plight of fathers and the never-ending tales of woe from men who are contacted by the CSA. The Government may be right to "encourage all parents to exercise responsibility for their children". But what if the absent parent shows little interest? Usually it's the woman left holding the baby and this will have mental, financial and moral consequences for the woman and child, especially when the "absent parent" flits in and out of that child's life.

If Lord Irvine [is] to bring the law into line with social changes, he should firstly consider how the absent parent (usually a man) is going to be encouraged to have parental responsibility. In my

experience, men want to father children, have their say in all matters, come and go as they please, and be under no obligation to provide anything, including time with their children. Janet Degener, Manchester.

LOD Irvine's proposal to give greater rights to unmarried fathers is welcome. But there would be no need for a change if the Government had done more to promote awareness of the definitions in the Children Act 1989. Why do registrars of birth not have information available explaining that unmarried parents can already make a "parental responsibility agreement"? This is free, involves no court or solicitor and secures the unmarried father's legal position.

Not that registrars of birth adopted the language of parental responsibility with sufficient enthusiasm. Making further changes to the law will be of no help if there is no greater commitment to making people aware of them. Ben Whitney, Stafford.

Phenomenal pronominal response

THE competition to invent a non-gender specific pronoun, (Leader, March 11), is just the latest example of pointless political correctness. In the rich tradition of the English language, if a new word/phrase has been needed, it has evolved naturally. To artificially create new language does not work. Alan Jewell, Preston.

IT does not require the invention of a new word. "Every-one should do his best" would

become: "Everyone should do one's best." Prof John Meehan, Brentwood, Essex.

YOUR leader confuses the word sex (biology) with gender, a grammatical term for a linguistic oddity confined, I think, to Indo-European languages. While there is often a correspondence between a noun's gender and the sex, if any, of the referent, there are many exceptions. Two German words for woman and girl are neuter; the reg-

ular Latin word for penis is feminine, while the female organ is masculine. Barry Thorpe, Cheshire, Cheshire.

THE best pronominal solution is "he" (pronounced like he). Example: "Was it a boy or a girl? His own parents still didn't know." Antony Ransome, Bremen, Germany.

MARGE Pien in her novel, *Woman On The Edge Of Time*, uses "per" derived from person. Robert Roche, Leek, Staffs.



South Bank: a wave of protest

AS THE long-awaited investment in the South Bank Centre disappears (South Bank 'glass wave' scrapped, March 11), the Millennium Dome takes shape. The price of the dome exceeds the combined cost of the New State Gallery in Stuttgart, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the Museum of Modern Art in Los Angeles, and the Sydney Opera House. Richard Rogers' "visionary plan" was to give us a dramatically controlled, well-ranking environment for visual art, music, theatre, film and performance at about a fifth of the cost of the Green-

wich project (full of hot air). These recent decisions are an eloquent expression of government attitudes towards our cultural life. David Ainley, Matlock, Derbyshire.

WAS delighted to read that Richard Rogers' plan for the South Bank has been shelved. For it would have meant that, in the year 2000, cultural life would have been seriously depleted, with no concerts at all, whilst building work was carried out. Val Mainwood, Colchester.

Standing up for the male member

TO read Dea Birkett (Stand up for the penis, March 10) you would think that penetrative sex were a thing of the past. How does she explain, then, the high number of unwanted pregnancies in the UK and the continuing association, not just in the male mind, it seems, of sex with penetration? The editors, meanwhile, remain surrounded by a wall of silence.

If the penis represents a taboo in our society, it is not because it is undervalued, but the opposite: it is invested with a cultural significance way out of proportion with the "simple functions" Birkett would have us celebrate. Rachel Terry, Hedden Bridge, W Yorks.

THERE was one article in Tuesday's Guardian that stood proud: Dea Birkett's celebration of the male penis. I must admit to sharing her passion, albeit for one in particular. In my case this can be traced back to an early interest in other things that grew, such as crystals and cress. Cathy Parker, N Yorks.

WAS alarmed to read that the penis is going out of fashion. When flared trousers became unfashionable I threw mine in the dustbin. What am I to do now? Jeremy Miles, Bournemouth, Dorset.

Princely sum: Ardent he may be but artless he ain't

ONE would have expected at least a token critical element in Luke Harding's piece on Edward Windsor (Prince's Progress, G2, March 10). He acknowledges Edward has shamelessly used his name to further the interests of Ardent. However, the picture he paints is of someone who has fought on, with admirable determination, despite a career "dogged by accusations that he was simply cashing in on his royal status". In fact, these "accusations" are simply statements of fact, which even the most charitable of observers would have difficulty challenging. Shihab Nadim, London.

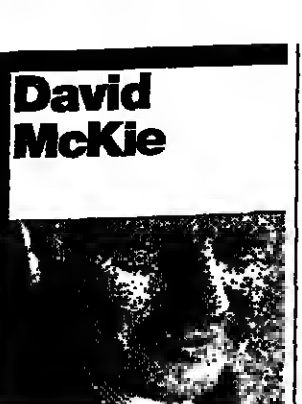
YOU write of Prince Edward: "Last year his salary was £114,125 — the Queen continues to pay him £26,000. But he is not rich." So he is getting about £330 a day and probably royal expenses. In which case I am an absolute pauper, although I worked all my life

until I was retired two years ago. I wonder how much one needs to be rich these days if the non-rich are getting well over £200,000 a year. Terry Mullins, London N7.

RATHER than hiring a PR expert to improve his image, the royal family could do worse than keep quiet about the heir to the throne needing minor surgery in a private hospital (Prince Charles undergoes knee surgery, March 10), when it suited his busy schedule, due to an excess of polo playing and skiing. And then riding back to his country manor in a helicopter. Nic Rowley, London.

THE popular Buckingham Palace website Buckingham.com gives a telephone number to ring for prices of admission. There's modern royalty for you. Peter Chapman, Bridgend.

Hitler and who?



FOR many years newspapers got along pretty well without much recourse to the word "arguably". Now it is everywhere. She is arguably the brightest/dimmes/most erudite/scrofulous of all the Labour MPs. He is arguably the finest midfielder ever to come out of Bedfordshire. And so on. One can hardly imagine a greater foe of such practices

than the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-51). "What can be said at all," he wrote, "can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must remain silent." It therefore seems fairly ironic that Wittgenstein should be the subject of a new book by Kimberley Cornish, *The Jew of Linz*, which, if last week's Sunday Times extract is any reliable guide, must represent the elevation of "arguably" to a whole new art form.

Cornish's thesis is this. Hitler's virulent anti-Semitism, as he records in *Mein Kampf*, was born in his schooldays. But who was the hated schoolmate? "This boy who turned Hitler into the killer of 6 million Jews". Although Cornish concedes there is not much to go on in Hitler's book, it is possible to make a fair bet, and the fair bet is Ludwig Wittgenstein — a boy just a few days younger than Hitler, who joined him at the Real-

schule in Linz in 1904. Though there were other Jewish boys at the school, Wittgenstein fits the bill perfectly. "We face, I think, the astounding possibility that the course of 20th-century history was radically influenced by a quarrel between two schoolboys."

This is startling enough, but what Cornish calls the denouement is no less spectacular. When Wittgenstein came back to Cambridge in 1929, the celebrated spies, Philby, Burgess, and Blunt were among his college contemporaries, while Donald Maclean was just down the road. "Of course," Cornish concedes "the mere fact of their attending Trinity at the same time proves nothing." But Wittgenstein certainly knew them, through his work, his homosexuality, and his membership of the secret society called the Apostles. "I do not wish to labour the point," Cornish writes, "but one has to consider a question that has never been satisfactorily

resolved: who was the Soviet recruiter who created the spy ring?" One hypothesis is that this mysterious figure was none other than Wittgenstein. The recruiter must have been a remarkable man; "that he might have been one of the most brilliant minds of the 20th century has not been suspected."

THE extract, of course, represents only a segment of Cornish's book. Restrictions of space may have denied us equal consideration of another outstanding intellect at Trinity in those days, a man who suffered a huge revulsion from a previous passion for Germany; who like Wittgenstein once venerated Nietzsche but later turned to religion; who was touched for a while, we now know, by homosexual love; and whose powers of persuasion far outstripped those of Wittgenstein. I do not wish to labour the point, but one hypothesis is

that the master recruiter was Enoch Powell. Was he not, in later years, virulently anti-American? Did he not speak more warmly of Russia than any frontbench Conservative contemporary? He may not fit the bill perfectly, but it is, I think, a fair bet that he fits quite as well as Wittgenstein.

I hope, too, that Cornish has found room in his book to consider my own pet theory that Wittgenstein is to blame for the long decline of Huddersfield Town — once one of the greatest forces in English football, and for 32 years from 1920 a continuous presence in the game's top division. And yet in the season 1951-52 they suddenly lost it. One has to ask what happened in 1951 to change things so drastically? One hypothesis is that Wittgenstein died. True, there is no actual evidence that Ludwig was a supporter or even attended a game. But until his sad death at the end of the 1950-51 season there was al-

ways that possibility. As they trotted out at Leeds Road in the season which followed, it's a fair bet, I think, that the players were stricken by the knowledge that the famous philosopher could now never take his place on the terraces with his blue and white scarf, his rattle and his mug of hot Bovril, urging them on now and then with some quotation from Schopenhauer, but mostly harking his team with the kind of support which he valued the most: his silence.

If this hypothesis is right, we face the astounding possibility that the course of 20th-century football was radically influenced by a man who never went anywhere near it. Just as we face the astounding possibility that the Sunday Times unloaded on its readers last week one of the biggest loads of steaming old tosh inflicted by any serious newspaper on its defenceless readers in this generation. Arguably.

Adopt a Cub for Mother's Day

and help WSPA save bears from cruelty.

Guler was found wandering the streets of Istanbul. Hunters probably shot her mother so Guler could be taught to "dance" for tourists. With her brother Erol, she's now safe at WSPA's bear sanctuary. You can help keep these cubs safe by adopting them as a gift for your mother. For £15 we'll send an adoption certificate, two photos of the cubs and their story. For £25 you'll get all these, plus a video of the cubs playing. Please help WSPA protect bears worldwide.

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Your name _____
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Date of birth (if under 18) _____
If you are adopting a cub as a gift for your mother and want their name on the certificate, please write their name here: _____
I want to adopt Erol and Guler for
☐ £15 (for an adoption certificate, 2 photos and the cubs' story)
☐ £25 (for all the above plus a video of the cubs)
(Please make your cheque payable to WSPA or fill in your credit card details below.)
Visa / MasterCard / Switch / Eurocard / CAF CharityCard / Amex
(Please circle the card you are using)
Card No. _____
(If paying by Switch, please use the number printed across the middle of your card.)
Expiry date _____ Switch issue no. _____ Today's date _____
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Lloyd Bridges

Lead role in a star dynasty

ALTHOUGH the rugged, blond actor Lloyd Bridges, who has died aged 85, had been in dozens of movies since 1941, he had to wait more than three decades to achieve substantial fame. Curiously, this came about because he was the father of bigger stars, Beau and Jeff Bridges, and because he parodied his own poker-faced macho persona in spoofs like *Airplane!* (1980).

The success of these post-1980 performances derived from his playing it straight, as if he believed in the crazy goings-on around him. In fact, his stiff, humourless acting style differed very little from that in the string of action pictures of his pre-*Airplane!* days.

Naturally, the joke was funnier for those who remembered Bridges's far-fetched heroics in the TV series *Sea Hunt*. This ran for some 156 episodes between 1957 to 1961. Not so funny was his blacklisting. This came during the era of the red scare focused on Senator Joseph McCarthy during the early 1950s. Eventually Bridges succumbed and appeared as a "friendly witness" — one who co-operated — before the House Un-American Activities Committee. This meant that he named names of other poten-

There is an irony in the fact that *High Noon* made an intentional analogy with McCarthyism

formed in stock companies, where he was spotted by a producer for Columbia Pictures and given a contract in 1941.

In four years at Columbia, he walked through 14 features, including several in the studio's *Lone Wolf and Boston Blackie* series, played stooge to Joe E. Brown and Abbott and Costello, and was one of the assorted desert rats under Sergeant Humphrey Bogart

in *Sahara* (1943). On going freelance in 1945 not much changed, with Bridges as one of assorted GIs in a platoon in Italy under Sergeant Dana Andrews in *Lewis Milestone's A Walk in the Sun*. However the films were getting better, and his roles slightly bigger.

He soon found a niche as a stolid, handsome heavy, often baring his chest, in westerns, obstructing heroes Dana Andrews in *Canyon Passage* (1946) Joel McCrea in *Rancho 1947*, and Randolph Scott in *Colt .45* (1950). In *The White Tower* (1950) Bridges was at his most convincingly obnoxious as an arrogant ex-Nazi on a mountain expedition, who despises Glenn Ford's decadent democratic principles. In the same year in *The Sound of Fury* he played a brutish kidnapper who kills his victim, the son of a wealthy family, in cold blood, before being lynched by a mob.

One of his few redeemable characters was in *Home of the Brave* (1949), the first Hollywood movie to deal overtly with racial prejudice, Bridges being the only buddy of a black soldier in a five-man group on a Japanese-held island. It was produced by Stanley Kramer and written by Carl Foreman, both of whom went on to make *High Noon* (1952). In this classic



Father of the stars... Lloyd Bridges with his sons Beau (left) and Jeff, in Malibu, California in 1980

western Bridges played Marshall Gary Cooper's deputy, who refuses to support his superior against a group of gunmen out of both jealousy and cowardice. There is a hitherto unacknowledged irony in the fact that the film made an intentional analogy with McCarthyism.

It was soon after making *The Runmaker* (1956), in which he played spinsters Katherine Hepburn's obdurate brother, that he landed

the role of Mike Nelson, the former Navy frogman in the underwater adventure TV series *Sea Hunt*, which made him a household name. (Both his sons, Beau and Jeff, got their first parts as kids in the series.) After four years of teaching sharks, both animal and human, rescuing people from perils at sea, Bridges announced he was leaving the show. "They wanted more cops and robbers," he ex-

plained. "I wanted to look at the real villains of the sea, like the oil companies." In addition to his acting, Bridges was active in the support of many social and environmental causes and, in 1988, he headed a mission to investigate starvation in sub-Saharan Africa. By this time he had embarked on his new self-parodic career, launched by *Airplane!*, in which he was the chain-smoking, heavy-

drinking ground control official. This was followed by *Airplane II: The Sequel* (1982), causing more chaos in mission control than in the doomed space ship. In June 1992 Bridges underwent open-heart surgery, but was back at work in six weeks on *Hot Shots! Part Deux* (1993) playing Tug Benson, the sort of crazy American officer that makes both friends and foes quake with fear.

Bridges, who leaves his wife, two sons, a daughter and 11 grandchildren, recently completed two forthcoming features, *Just Austin's Mafia* and *Meeting Daddy*, the latter with his elder son Beau.

Ronald Berman

Lloyd Bridges, film actor, born January 15, 1913; died March 10, 1998

Connie Seifert

Inseparable from the left

IN THE 1950s Connie Seifert, who has died aged 87, and her husband Sigmund placed their north London home in Highgate at the disposal of the left, and specifically the Communist Party of Great Britain, of which they were both members. It became a social centre, a political forum that flowed on through the cold war, the anti-colonial struggle, the Vietnam conflict, the 1973 Chilean coup, even beyond the 1992 dissolution of the CPGB.

So on a 1950s summer evening Paul Robeson could be found singing there to raise funds for Cheddi Jagan's British Guianan People's Progressive Party. Nigeria's Prince Ojukwu II Oba dropped in for a couple of nights and stayed — with entourage — for three months, while waging an anti-colonial case before the Privy Council against the British government. Even Ransome Kuti and her musician son, Fela, came by.

At the house, Connie's gifts as a hostess were given full rein. As a safe haven it provided shelter for left-wing refugees from Aala, the Middle East and Africa. In the 1970s Chilean communist leader Luis Corvalan stayed in the house for several days — with armed bodyguards — in the wake of the Pinochet 1973 coup.

Constance Seifert was born in London's East End of a Polish Jewish family which had emigrated to escape the pogroms. For all her life she loved the songs, feasts, and the earthy humour of the Yiddish language. But offended, as a teenager, by women's secondary role within Orthodox Judaism, she sought to reconcile affection for Jewish culture and anger at religious bigotry within the secular wing of the Zionist movement, organising visits for young people to Palestine.

Then in the early 1930s she herself went on one such trip. She returned to England shocked, and disillusioned, by the anti-Arabism she had encountered. She became an anti-Zionist, but one acutely



Connie Seifert... keeping open house for the left

conscious of the dangers of it overlapping, in some instances, with anti-Semitism. It was in 1935, with fascism sweeping Europe, that Connie and her then future husband, Sigmund Seifert, joined the CPGB. For the next 40 years they were inseparable. And Connie remained an active party member until its demise in 1992.

She worked tirelessly on the wartime evacuation of London children, but her anti-imperialism led her to refuse an official honour. She later regretted the decision, deciding it might have opened more doors for the causes which she held dear.

Peace, she raised her family and continued her political work around the CPGB. This took in the National As-

sembly of Women, the British Peace Committee and the British Soviet Friendship Society. Later she was active in the campaign for nuclear disarmament. Connie's political work continued into this year. Long after Vietnam was out of fashion on the left she continued with her work around the British Vietnam Association.

Connie Seifert was charming, amusing, generous — and an inveterate letter writer. Her loyal devoted husband Sigmund died in 1979; she leaves four children.

Blanche Flannery

Sheila Rowbotham writes: When Connie Seifert asked me to speak at an early 1970s meeting of the National As-

sembly of Women I was aware of a cool strategic eye looking out from this tiny Communist Party woman. Women's liberationists tended to be viewed as kikes, not only by the left, but by established women's organisations. We were young, full of ourselves, mini-skirted and lacking in gratitude for the slow accretion of reforms won by our elders. Connie, however, had seen something moving.

Like many left women of her generation she clearly found our preoccupation with personal behaviour and sexual politics bizarre. But she did talk about the hidden forms of inequality which she had encountered as a young woman when she joined the CPGB. What she did not say, but was evident, was that she had become adept at negotiating her way round any obstacles. Over the years I came to recognise her political organisational skills. She had the mark of a real political pro: stoicism.

By the mid-1970s the London Women's Liberation Workshop had sprouted its own sectarian divisions. When a furious fight broke out over whether men should come on the International Women's Day march, many socialist feminists stopped going to the planning meetings. Connie's decisions were reversed every week. Not Connie; she was still doggedly going when we had long fallen by the wayside. She stayed calm and argued — the habits of years of experience.

When I saw her at a talk by Caroline Benn on Kier Hardie at the Marx Memorial Library. She was having trouble with her legs but nonetheless went to the pub after the meeting. The political world she had lived by had collapsed. But she still had that resilience. She was looking about her, waiting to see what would happen next.

Constance Seifert, campaigner, born January 20, 1911; died February 27, 1998

Letter

Steven Lukes writes: Martin Hollis (obituary, March 5) was a philosopher of our time, humanist and humane, an encyclopaedic magpie, who raised the social science disciplines, unmasking their underlying models of man. He and I have edited the forthcoming *Questioning the Enlightenment* defending its central ideas against their present-day detractors, but only by the left, but by established women's organisations. We were young, full of ourselves, mini-skirted and lacking in gratitude for the slow accretion of reforms won by our elders. Connie, however, had seen something moving.

Like many left women of her generation she clearly found our preoccupation with personal behaviour and sexual politics bizarre. But she did talk about the hidden forms of inequality which she had encountered as a young woman when she joined the CPGB. What she did not say, but was evident, was that she had become adept at negotiating her way round any obstacles. Over the years I came to recognise her political organisational skills. She had the mark of a real political pro: stoicism.

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Constance Seifert, campaigner, born January 20, 1911; died February 27, 1998

Birthdays

Sir Antony Acland, Provost of Eton, 68; Dr Giovanni Agnelli, chairman of Fiat, 77; Edward Albee, playwright, 70; Raul Alfonsín, former president of Argentina, 71; Ronald Alley, artist, 72; Virginia Bottomley, MP, former Conservative minister, 50; Norbert Brainin, violinist, 75; Willie Duggan, rugby footballer, 48; Philip Jones, former principal, Trinity College of Music, 70; Anish Kapoor, artist and sculptor, 44; David Mellor, broadcaster, former MP, 49; Liza Minnelli, actress and singer, 52; David Milnare, interior designer, 58; Patrick Procter, painter, 62; Ralph Shapley, composer and conductor, 77; James Taylor, singer, 50; Julian Trevellick, keeper, Art Gallery, National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 51; Elizabeth Vaughan, soprano, 61; Paul Way, golfer, 35; David Wilmore, chief constable, Greater Manchester, 59; Andrew Young, American civil rights veteran, former mayor of Atlanta, 66.

Sir John Jones

Gravity-shift at MI5

SIR John Jones, who has died aged 75, was the head of MI5 during the most controversial, and politically motivated, period of its history. Encouraged by Margaret Thatcher, the agency targeted groups it considered a subversive threat to national security — miners, left-wing trade unionists, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and the National Council of Civil Liberties.

He links between the shadow of the Bettany spy scandal after a damning report by the Security Commission on MI5's senior management. MI5 agent Michael Bettany was sentenced in 1984 to 23 years in prison for passing information to the Russians. But for years he had had alcohol problems and when drunk would say: "Come and see me in my dacha when I retire," and "I'm sure the East Germans would look after me better." All the while Bettany was a member of MI5's K branch, responsible for counter-espionage.

Jones himself was never a member of MI5's traditionally prestigious K branch — the usual route to the top. Much of his career had been in the agency's notorious F branch, responsible for counter-subversion. It was this which attracted Thatcher, who appointed him Director General of MI5 in 1981, after the retirement of Howard Smith, a former Foreign Office diplomat whose appointment by the Labour prime minister, James Callaghan, was deeply resented within MI5 — for the only reason that Smith was an outsider.

At an MI5 staff meeting called to improve the agency's image soon after he was appointed DG, Jones spoke of the dangers presented by trade unions and of what he called "the threat within", echoing Thatcher's rhetoric about the miners being the "enemy within".

MI5 needed no encouragement. Sir Michael Hanley, Smith's predecessor, diverted the agency's resources to countering subversion from what he called "the far and

wide left" during the periods of Heath's Tory, and Wilson's Labour, administrations. It helped to boost Jones's career. Peter Wright, who resented the new priority because it deflected attention from his own obsession with Soviet penetration of MI5 — described Jones in *Spycatcher* as "an F branch man through and through, and his appointment perfectly illustrated the decisive shift in MI5's centre of gravity".

Jones was a County Durham miner's son. He was educated at Nelson Grammar School in Cumberland and graduated with a history first from Christ's College, Cambridge after wartime Royal



Jones... targeted unions

Artillery service. He then took a Certificate of Education.

In 1947 he joined the Sudan Government Service, first as a teacher and later as an official in the Sudan Ministry of Education. Jones joined MI5 in 1955, which then, as now, was responsible for security in the colonies as well as Britain. He was posted to Hong Kong and Singapore, returning to London in the early 1960s and when he was put in charge of a feasibility study on computerisation of MI5's records.

He then supervised MI5's overseas branch and in 1965 was sent to Germany to reinvigorate the British Services Security Organisation, whose job was to prevent Warsaw Pact agents from penetrating

British garrisons. Awarded a CMG, he returned to London and was appointed director of MI5's overseas branch and subsequently director of the F4 counter-subversion branch. After a short spell as director of operations, he was appointed deputy director general in 1976.

He was in this post when, soon after she came to power, Thatcher learnt — initially through thinly-disguised references in Andrew Boyle's book *A Climate of Treason* — that Anthony Blunt, Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, had confessed 15 years earlier to being a Soviet spy but that the matter had been covered up to save the Queen and the security establishment from embarrassment. Jones, along with most of the Whitehall mandarins, advised Thatcher that she should not publicly name Blunt on the grounds that it would dissuade other spies from coughing up — as Blunt had done — in return for immunity from prosecution.

Thatcher rejected his advice, just as in 1985, in the wake of the Bettany affair, she insisted that senior MI5 management should not be protected from the criticism of the Security Commission. Jones, who was knighted in 1988, was succeeded by Sir Antony Acland, who introduced much-needed reforms in MI5. Jones retired to Boston, Lincoln, and spent part of his time chairing Civil Service selection boards. His wife Daphne, who he met in London, predeceased him.

Richard Norton-Taylor

John Lewis Jones, Director-General of MI5, born February 17, 1923; died March 9, 1998

Death Notices

BURGESS, In his sleep at North Tysoe, Bucks, on March 10, 1998, (aged 87) after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Joan, and three children. Burial at North Tysoe Church on March 12, 1998, at 11.30 am. Donations to St. Andrew's Church, North Tysoe, Bucks, or to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 40, Bedford Square, London WC1R 4EJ.

COATES, Jonathan. Suddenly on 7th March while in Accra, Ghana on business. He is survived by his wife, Mary, and three children. Burial at St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, on March 12, 1998, at 11.30 am. Donations to St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, or to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 40, Bedford Square, London WC1R 4EJ.

KORPEDEKKA, John. Suddenly on 7th March while in Accra, Ghana on business. He is survived by his wife, Mary, and three children. Burial at St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, on March 12, 1998, at 11.30 am. Donations to St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, or to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 40, Bedford Square, London WC1R 4EJ.

LINTS, Larry. Distinguished research chemist. Died suddenly on 7th March 1998, aged 78. He is survived by his wife, Mary, and three children. Burial at St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, on March 12, 1998, at 11.30 am. Donations to St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, or to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 40, Bedford Square, London WC1R 4EJ.

SMITH, Kathleen Frances (née Jones). Died suddenly on 7th March 1998, aged 78. She is survived by her husband, John, and three children. Burial at St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, on March 12, 1998, at 11.30 am. Donations to St. Mary's Church, Accra, Ghana, or to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 40, Bedford Square, London WC1R 4EJ.

To place your announcement telephone 011 713 2567 or fax 011 713 2128 between 9am and 5pm, Monday-Friday.

Jackdaw



RoboCup

TMORROW'S World used to promise that robots would be the way that would relieve man of his most mundane tasks and aid him in the contest of the stars. But Raymond Baxter never said anything about this. Toshiba have devised the first artificially intelligent volleyball player, Gabrielle Rebecq. Be very afraid. The Advanced Robot, as it is known, has got Toshiba very excited indeed. "The prototype integrates a wide range of technologies, including high-speed image processing, speech recognition, face recognition and force control," they explain.

And it need never worry about its bikini line. Mocks as we might, Toshiba are at the spearhead of a growing trend: idle leisure robotics. Vast amounts of time, money and man-hours have gone into producing a state of affairs where Jeremy Clarkson can oversee big hunks of metal smashing the crap out of each other for the BBC's Robot Wars.

And there's more. This summer, the second RoboCup, held in Nagoya, Japan, ended in an eerily realistic 0-0 draw. But one question remains in this brave new world of robo-future: Why?

"Robocup," explain the organisers, "promotes the development of the intelligent robots that can be sent into hostile environments in the future." Like Mars, or perhaps Millwall.

Arena gets technical.

Sexy minds

IN between putting out the rubbish and the school run, one rarely ponders the Big Questions such as the meaning of life, the nature of time,

and the existence of God. Our exchanges with each other tend to be more mundane. "Have you been on holiday yet?" the hand-dresser asks, rather than "Would it have been better not to have been born?" Yet, increasingly, thinking about thinking is becoming fashionable. "I think therefore I am" has become "I think therefore I am cool."

Cerebral chic is everywhere. In Paris and New York, the must-have fashion accessory right now is a rubber band imprinted with the word "Wittgenstein". Then there is the clothes collection by Italian fashion designer Alberta Ferretti under the label Philosophy. "Cosmetics keep the surface polished," she says, "but they are not what's really inside." *Harper's and Queen* has that thinking feeling.

Golf-power

THERE is a certain insecurity about women golfers.

We all try so hard to do a good medal card but half the time we're beaten before we start. We stand up on the first tee and think if the drive goes well, it'll be all right. Piling pressure on ourselves instead of thinking positively. We're devastated if we fluff our first drive, whereas a man would wellie it and stand back proudly as it disappeared into a bush talking only about how it would have been perfect if he had only managed to turn his hips a fraction more to the right on his back-swing, or some such rubbish. Men always know exactly what the problem is, even if they don't, if you get my drift.

Women & Golf advises its readers how to play golf, just like a man.

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4366; write Jackdaw, The Guardian, 115 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Hannah Pool

A Country Diary

HIGHLANDS: At a remote loch two men walked to the shore and scanned the fresh-water islands. On one of them an adult black-throated diver sank on its nest with neck low to the shingle. It remained in this position as the men launched their boat and rowed towards the island. The diver shuffled to the water and dived in with hardly a ripple. It surfaced a long way off and watched as the men reached

the island and, after a brief search, found the nest and the two darkly-marked brown eggs. The eggs were carefully wrapped and placed into a rigid box that went into a rucksack. As the men walked off on the shore the diver went to the empty nest. After a while it awam ably on the bay just as its mate came over, and they called to each other in their walling cries that suited the loss of eggs.

The eggs ended up in a cabinet constructed especially to hold a large egg collection and they were never seen again, as nobody bothered to look at them. This happens every year in the Highlands with a wide variety of rare species. The *Newspaper* indicates that in 1997 at least two pairs of these rare divers had their clutches of two eggs taken.

RAY COLLIER

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

A SIDEBAR on the Policy and Politics page, Page 11, March 10, included an item, Spectacle of the day: David Mellor. In it we said that Mr Mellor, while snoozing on the Euston to Coventry train, had his spectacles stolen by "two lads". Mr Mellor has asked us to say that there is not a word of truth in this story. We accept that and apologise for running the item, unchecked.

THE OBITUARY of Lord Donaldson, Page 8, March 10, should have referred to his interest in PG Wodehouse, not P J Wodehouse.

A CAPTION on Page 9, Friday Review, March 6, incorrectly identified the production still of Bogart and Bacall as a scene from *To Have and Have Not*, the first film they made with Howard Hawks. In fact it

shows them in the second film they made with Hawks, *The Big Sleep*.

It is the policy of the *Guardian* to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 3339 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 8897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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Analysis Road congestion

Revealed - the surprisingly rational face of the average motorist

New research challenges the view that schemes to limit or exclude vehicles merely add to the overall traffic chaos — and shows that drivers can be adaptable. **Keith Harper** reports

SCHOOL car drivers are a menace and that's official. Parents taking their children to school each day within the inner London 0171 telephone area cause the equivalent of an 11 minute traffic jam, according to figures now being studied by the deputy prime minister, John Prescott, as he reaches the final stages of preparing a transport white paper aimed at stopping Britain choking itself to death.

When the time comes for decision making, he may therefore be spurred into creating more traffic-free zones in our cities, more cycleways and more bus lanes on the basis of an extraordinary report yesterday which suggests that giving more space to pedestrians and public transport does not create traffic chaos as is often thought.

The research, headed up by one of Mr Prescott's own advisers, Professor Phil Goodwin, of University College London, and funded by London Transport and by Mr Prescott's own department, is no doubt singing to the deputy prime minister's own tune. It confirms the practical experience of many local planners who say: "The traffic has disappeared and we don't know where it has gone to."

A review of more than 60 cities world-wide including, in the UK, Oxford, Wolverhampton and Edinburgh, shows that reducing road space for general traffic causes some traffic to "evaporate" on average by a quarter of the original flow on the affected road. This seems to suggest that the case against pedestrianisation, bus priority and trams is less powerful than previous studies have shown.

There are, of course, some streets where traffic will increase but the results show that the overall reduction, as a percentage of the initial traffic on the affected roads, was 25 per cent. Half the cases showed traffic reductions of more than 16 per cent.

The research team found that, when faced with delays caused by a scheme to cut the volume of vehicles on their route, motorists tended first seek an alternative way, or were prepared to put up with a slightly longer journey time. If they felt the result was still causing an unacceptable degree of inconvenience, they

selected from a wide range of possibilities. These include seeing if an alternative destination is possible (for shopping trips, for instance), combining journeys and sharing cars.

The result of reducing the volume of traffic on a road is almost certainly less than if the drivers and vehicles displaced continued to use the same mode of travel, the researchers say. The clear conclusion for Mr Prescott is that people more readily adapt their travel behaviour than is implied in many of the commonly-used traffic modelling procedures.

The research is not foolproof as an examination of the evidence shows, but it indicates that planners can provide considerable advantages for road-based public transport. For instance, the closure of Hammersmith bridge across the Thames in west London for repairs has "wiped out" 35,000 vehicles a day at a stroke. That delights many local people who say that the environment has improved and pollution has decreased. But traffic has seeped elsewhere, across other London bridges, where congestion has deteriorated, causing local planners to tear out their hair.

Mr Prescott has to make a difficult political judgment: he can tempt the parents of those inner London school children to leave their cars behind only if they can be persuaded to use convenient alternative transport modes — that is if they do

not want their children to walk.

Support for this idea came yesterday in a study of public attitudes to Britain's transport system sponsored by Railtrack, the BAA, Sustrans, the RAC and the Pedestrians' Association. The survey carried out by MORI offered the solution for which a long line of transport secretaries have yearned. The Government must produce policies to move people from cars to other modes by combining both incentives and penalties.

KEN LIVINGSTONE shot to prominence as leader of the Greater London Council during the 1980s partly on the back of introducing a flat-rate fare on the London Underground which rapidly increased passenger usage. That could not happen now because the system is bursting at the seams, and LU would need a further large subsidy from the Government.

Not surprisingly the MORI survey reveals that strong support exists among 9 out of 10 members of the public for better investment in public transport, the introduction of "park and ride" schemes, and for building car parks next to bus or train stations on the outskirts of towns and cities.

The only penalty supported by car drivers are severe restrictions in city areas. Less popular are taxing employers

on the amount of car parking space they offer staff and charging those who park in town centre office car parks the same rate as for local public car parks.

Policies that impose direct costs on to the road-user are consistently opposed by the majority of the public, according to the report. Doubling the price of petrol is opposed by 94 per cent of drivers (although clearly many would pay up); charging £5 to drive into local town or city centres is opposed by 72 per cent, and introducing road tolls is opposed by 68 per cent. But Railtrack and the other transport groups believe that the level of opposition would come down if there was a commitment to spend the money raised on public transport.

This is at the heart of the debate. Is Mr Prescott likely to win his argument with the Treasury that parking and road charges must be channelled into transport improvements? The evidence from a sample survey of 300 businesses across London published last night suggests that companies would be willing to back the idea so long as the Chancellor did not swallow up the revenue.

Preliminary results from London First, the business campaign group, indicate that companies do not see parking charges as a way of combating congestion, rather as a way of raising revenue to improve transport. They would also

absorb the costs of the charges themselves, rather than pass them on to employees.

If the charge was £1,000 per space in central London and £750 in inner London, companies would pay up on behalf of staff, it much higher levels were set, the charge would be passed on to employees. In both instances, the least likely option would be to look for a new location outside the capital.

An initial indication of how the battle between Mr Brown and Mr Prescott is shaping up will emerge in next week's Budget. There will be a huge hike in the price of petrol, but will the Chancellor begin to tackle the green agenda, so glowingly promised by Labour?

If not, then it is better to be cautious about how the Government will go about paying for transport improvements. Mr Blair wants to win the next election and the signs are already coming from Downing Street to groups like the motorist organisations and Transport 3000 that he does not want to alienate middle England and produce mass demonstrations in Trafalgar Square.

Ministers are showing clear signs of wanting to devolve responsibility to local authorities, thus keeping the issue at arm's length from Westminster. Town halls will be given the opportunity to impose congestion charges on motorists — even in countryside bottlenecks like the Lake District — impose fines on unwary drivers for stinking emissions, and increase car parking limits.

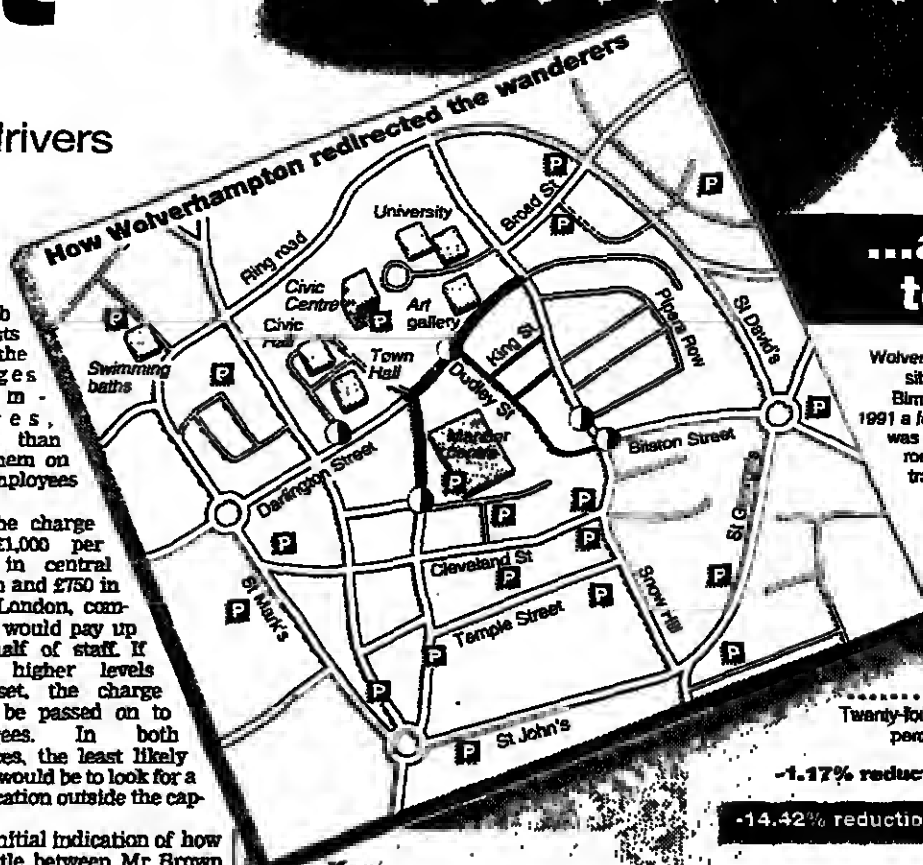
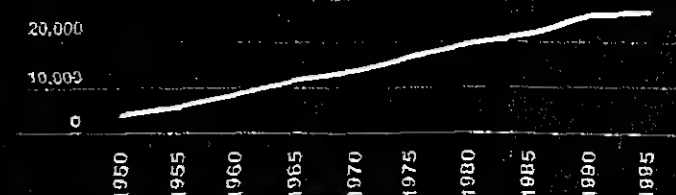
Councils will be given the authority to plough back the proceeds from these penalties into local transport improvements, so if it does not work the Government will not have to take the blame. If the funds raised are sufficient, there could be new bus routes, and park-and-ride schemes on the outskirts of our towns and cities.

The Tarmac trend...

Road growth Total length, kilometres



Motor vehicles Total, all types, 000s



...and how to beat it

Wolverhampton, a town of 250,000 situated 15 miles north west of Birmingham. Between 1987 and 1991 a four-phase transport strategy was introduced. The central core roads were gradually closed to traffic, effectively blocking two major routes, east-west and north-south, through the city centre. All phases were preceded by extensive consultation and publicity. Plus a programme of street refurbishment.

The result
a big drop in traffic
Twenty-four hour, two-way traffic flow percentage change, 1980 - 1996

-1.17% reduction Approach roads
-14.42% reduction Inner roads

Other success stories

Changes in traffic flows after reductions in road capacity

Altered location, %
Entire area, %

-41.9
-15.9
-39.5
-7.5
-10.6
-10.5
-9.7
-5.7

Hammersmith Bridge, local area (1 month)

Oxford city centre 1974-84

Edinburgh, New Town cordon (3 months)

Edinburgh, New Town cordon (3 months)

Edinburgh, New Town cordon (3 months)

Edinburgh, New Town cordon (3 months)

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Finance Guardian

Leschly's head on the block

Pressure on non-execs to revive drugs merger

Lisa Buckingham
and Julia Finch

THE drugs giant Glaxo Wellcome is understood to be encouraging leading City shareholders to seek the scalp of SmithKline Beecham's chief executive, Jan Leschly, in order to clear the way for a revival of a \$100 billion merger of the two groups.

Sir Richard Sykes, head of Glaxo, has now met most of the group's substantial investors to explain why the merger failed — even though both he and Mr Leschly had promised it would create billions of pounds of extra value for shareholders.

Glaxo's team has not formally suggested shareholder action, but many investors have been left with the clear

impression that the \$2 million-a-year Mr Leschly is to blame for the failure of negotiations and is the only obstacle to resurrection of the deal. As a result, they are now calling for the non-executive directors of both companies to meet and thrash out a way

to revive the deal. If that fails, some investors are threatening to take direct action by summoning an extraordinary general meeting.

At an event they could demand that Mr Leschly and his board explain their on-off merger plans and strategy — which has seen SmithKline announce links with two rivals already this year, only to jilt both partners.

When the deal with Glaxo collapsed, Sir Richard requested an urgent round of

top level one-to-one meetings with shareholders and institutional investors. However, an eerie silence has descended around SmithKline, best known for Horlicks, Lactaid and anti-depressant Serenax, which has told leading fund managers it will be three weeks before it holds meetings to explain the merger breakdown.

There has been speculation that the group wants to finalise innovative plans to fund its research and come up with

fresh reasons to remain independent before facing shareholders.

But one fund manager spoke for many when he said: "It is very difficult to accept that only a few days ago this deal was going to create billions of value for us but now we must just accept the whole thing has been shelved. Without a better explanation from both companies there is a strong case for us to approach the non-executive directors to get them to do what

is necessary to revive the deal."

According to another fund manager, Glaxo is still determined to pull off the merger and Sir Richard Sykes has given investors full details of the advantages of the link-up.

"The merger would have delivered phenomenal benefits," said one institutional investor who met Sir Richard last week. "The advantages are far greater than they had suggested at the time the merger was planned. This is a deal that has to happen."

When the deal was abandoned there was speculation that Glaxo would mount a hostile bid for SmithKline and that the round of meetings with key shareholders was designed to gauge support. But a fund manager who attended one of the meetings said: "The chances of that are zero. The clear message from Glaxo is that the merger proposal would bring immense benefits for shareholders in both companies."

Almost all Glaxo's institutional shareholders are also shareholders in SmithKline.

Glaxo

Glaxo's non-executive directors — paid £24,000 a year plus benefits worth £5,000 — are:

Michelle Barzach — former French minister of health and the family. No shares.

Derek Bonham — Chairman of Hanson Energy Group and Imperial Tobacco. 5,000 shares.

Sir Roger Hurst Deputy chairman of Glaxo and the new

chairman of GEC. 3,500 shares.

Prof Arthur L. E. Vice Chancellor of Chinese University of Hong Kong. No shares.

John McArthur Former Dean of Harvard Business School. 2,000 shares.

Dr Rosalind Schmitz on board at Deutsche Bank. No shares.

Prof Sir Richard Southwood Former Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University. 958 shares.

Peter John Chief executive of Reuters. Shareholding unknown.

SKB

SmithKline Beecham's non-executive directors get £500,000 a year among them. Chairman Sir Peter Walters, former boss of BP, gets £250,000 of that. Owns 20,000 shares.

Sir Christopher Hogg Chairman of Allied Domecq and Reuters. Owns 4,230

Baroness Hooper. Also a director of Winterthur. 500 shares.

Paul Allaire. Chairman and

chief executive of Rank Xerox. 5,000 equity unit ADRs — the way British shares are traded in the US.

William Grant. Chairman of Galen associates. 11,000 ADRs.

Donald McHenry. Professor at Georgetown University. 1,136 ADRs.

John Young. Director Smart Valley, Chevron, Wells Fargo. 3,000 ADRs.

Dr Lucy Shapiro. Professor at Stanford University. Director Sillcon graphics.

Notebook

Now Eddie is the people's choice



Edited by
Alex Brummer

IN ONE leap, Eddie George has been transformed from the embattled Bank of England chief uncertain of his future to the reappointed people's Governor. At the February 4 Monetary Policy Committee, Mr George voted not once but twice against a rise in the interest rates which remain at 7.25 per cent.

There are a couple of curiosities about these events. The first of these, created by the absence from the MPC of Oxford academic John Vickers who has yet to take up his position, was the 4-4 tied vote with the deputy-Governor designate Mervyn King switching sides to vote with outsiders Alan Budd, Willem Buiter and Charles Goodhart for higher rates.

This allowed Mr George to prove that he was still the most powerful figure in UK monetary policy by using his casting vote to protect the consumer from higher mortgage rates.

The second of the curiosities is that these events appear to have come as no surprise to the markets. By all accounts, the foreign exchange markets took advantage of lucky speculation of the split to mark sterling lower on Tuesday afternoon on the grounds that the Bank is not yet ready to apply the squeeze.

It would appear that even information which is five weeks old can be market sensitive if it leaks out before publication date, although the authorities lean towards the view that this was intelligent speculation rather than a security breach.

As for the substance of the MPC's deliberations, the arguments followed well-rehearsed lines. The hawk, this time led by Mervyn King, noted that inflation was likely to be above the 2.5 per cent target in the first quarter of 2000; that the labour market is tightening; that the risk for the exchange rates are on the downside as the current account worsens and that output may, actually, be running above trend despite the slowdown in manufacturing.

Operating in the other direction are the first signs, seen in industrial production and some retail data, that the economy is slowing. Another factor was the downside risks of the Asian problem.

As for the Indonesian problems still unresolved and equity prices perilously high, any precipitate moves could quickly be regretted. There was a sensible view that if rates were increased now and the slowdown became more pronounced, the credibility of the MPC could be undermined if the Bank was forced into a quick reversal.

The Bank's reticence does appear wise. If the advance word from Downing Street is to be believed, then inflation

will receive no help from fiscal policy in next week's Budget far from it. The Government intends to hold the line on spending. The behaviour of the pound in the run up to EMU is also highly unpredictable.

Even if the UK trade balance does deteriorate, sterling will remain a non-EMU safe-haven for the time being, offering substantially better yields than its competitors which may well keep sterling trading the DMB level. Industry and the public would not thank the Bank or anyone else for raising rates now, just as the export squeeze is starting to feed through hard into company profits and, in some cases, jobs.

Digital directions

BITISH regulators have a poor record when it comes to innovation but Don Cruickshank, the departing telecoms watchdog, is proving an exception. Addressing the change about to engulf broadcasting with the advent of digital transmission, Mr Cruickshank outlined a radical blueprint for regulating the communications age.

The BBC licence fee should be allowed to rise, he said, in line with its costs to safeguard its ability to deliver its output, which accounts for much of the country's public service broadcasting.

To protect against "information poverty" and ensure all people can receive BBC broadcasts irrespective of the higher licence fee, the social security system should be brought into play.

The public service broadcasting requirement imposed on ITV and Channel 5 should be abandoned by 2004 at the latest, being unenforceable. All "relevant companies" should be made to contribute to a universal service fund to ensure that no single company is forced unfairly to carry the burden of supplying areas and people who represent unprofitable business.

And if all this means scrapping much of the telecoms and broadcasting legislation, then so be it. The challenge for Mr Cruickshank's successor will be carrying forward his ideas.

Schroders way

IF THE serried ranks of the world's financial commentators were anticipating exclusive insights into value-based investing when they turned up for the results presentation at the UK's last world class investment bank, Schroders, they may have been disappointed.

Given the company's problems in Asia, the full year profits performance of £245 million, up from £239 million in 1996 — despite a £32 million write-off for Asian downfalls and exposure — was impressive. So is the bank's honourable intention to build up its US operation with a \$150 million investment.

One advantage for Schroders is that its independence is attracting new clients from those upset at the bloodletting surrounding the SBC Warburg-UBS merger. There may be more to come.

Secret flight for Rolls talks

Ian Traynor in Bonn

THE MAN tipped to be the next chancellor of Germany, Gerhard Schröder, has flown to Britain on a secret mission to try to clinch Volkswagen's bid for Rolls-Royce, the luxury car maker.

He flew to London and Crewe by private jet last weekend for negotiations with executives from Rolls and its parent company, Vickers, about a VW takeover of the famous marque.

According to reports in Bonn, the VW boss Ferdinand Piech, a personal friend of Mr Schröder, is confident that after three hours of talks at the weekend he has won the battle to take over Rolls

for between £250 million and £400 million.

While VW headquarters in Wolfsburg refused to comment on the alleged coup, rival German carmaker BMW insisted it was still in the race and Vickers said no final deal had been agreed. However VW was thought to be the only serious contender, with a formal bid from either imminent.

Mr Schröder has just triumphed in elections in the northern state of Lower Saxony, home of VW's Wolfsburg headquarters, winning a third term there as prime minister, and is the opposition social democrat (SPD) contender for the chancellorship in Germany's general election in September.

Safety threat as EU not up to the mark

Dan Atkinson

THE "CE" mark that supposedly certifies toys, electrical goods and other products as conforming with European safety rules is virtually worthless, according to regulatory and scientists. Counterfeiters in the Far East and manufacturers at home are plastering the "Euro norm" on products that ought not to be on sale.

Sixty per cent of CE-marked goods on sale in this country have been incorrectly labelled, one-quarter of them deliberately, according to SGS, Europe's leading testing and certification organisation, and poses a real public risk.

The remaining three-quarters of mislabeled goods result from ignorance among British manufacturers and importers of what the European regulations require of them: they certify themselves with the CE mark without meeting required standards.

In both cases, hard-pressed local government trading standards officers lack resources to enforce the regulations. Ed Chicken, trading standards chief for Middlesbrough and spokesman on counterfeiting for the Institute of Trading Standards Administration, said extra resources and a Europe-wide minimum level of enforcement were needed.

One leading American certification expert said the CE mark was a shambles, with Chinese counterfeiters taking advantage of the blame. The US government has been leaning on China with regard to America's own safety labels, but — in the words of a British expert on authentication issues — "the EU has done so badly".

A spokesman for Europe's industry directorate, DG3, said member states were responsible for enforcing the Euro-norm with regard both to domestic manufacturers and importers. "We are urging them to be as complete as possible with their controls."

The mark is required on a range of goods sold within the single market and differs from the British kitemark, which is a voluntary scheme. Peter Lowe, director of the Counterfeiting Intelligence Bureau in London said misuse of the CE mark was "part and parcel of product faking". Asked if the CE mark was in danger of becoming worthless, he said: "I think it is."

Richard Carran, a private investigator and counterfeiting specialist, said policing of the Euro-norm had to be stepped up to make it a "quality mark".

Spending spree to revive the fortunes of fading hotels around the world



Sweeping search... Savoy Group is examining a number of faded hotels across the world as candidates for a classy revival

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Savoy chief on grand buying tour

Alex Brummer
Financial Editor

THE faded grandeur of some of the world's finest hotels is to be revived in a global expansion of one of Britain's best-known brands, the Savoy. Raman Pajares, managing director of the Savoy Group, is running looking a number of similarly declining hotels in major cities around the world. Once targets have been identified, the Savoy Group will embark on an acquisition and refurbishment spending spree.

Mr Pajares has already restored the company's three Swiss London hotels — Claridge's, the Savoy and the Berkeley — to their former stature.

He believes that the group has achieved what it can in London and is now looking for new challenges abroad.

Mr Pajares has taken time out for private inspections of some hotels in Manhattan. He is also understood to have cast his eyes over the Madrid Ritz.

He believes that the timelessness and quality of the Savoy brand would have an appeal in the more distin-

guished international centres of commerce including Paris, New York, Rome and Madrid.

In London, the Savoy Group has set out to attract global high fliers as guests.

The complication for the enterprising Mr Pajares has been the group's complex ownership structure. The Granada group owns 68 per cent of the equity, having acquired the Forte stake, but only has 42 per cent of the votes.

Voting control still rests with the old proprietors, the Wontner family, who are still reluctant to relinquish control exercised

through special "B" shares which account for a majority of the votes.

Despite this difficulty, and the publicly declared intention of Granada to sell its stake when the right buyer comes along, Mr Pajares believes that he can raise sufficient finance to embark on his expansion ambitions.

This is being made easier by the group's strong financial management, with second half profits expected to be sharply up on the £7.7 million in the first half.

The revival of the Savoy Group has continued into

1998 despite the uncertainties in the international economy caused by the Asian crisis. In February, normally one of the quietest months of the year, occupancy levels at the Berkeley were as high as 86 per cent, figures unheard of in the group's recent past.

Mr Pajares has sought to create a common esprit de corps among the London hotels by developing a common reservations systems. This allows a guest seeking an art deco suite in Claridge's, at the last moment, to be accommodated at the Savoy itself if the first choice is not available.

Schroders keeps it in the family

Ian King

SCHRODERS yesterday insisted it could go it alone in the increasingly competitive world of investment banking despite the disappearance of the majority of British rivals into the arms of larger foreign firms.

The biggest of Britain's few remaining independent investment banks said it had received no serious approaches from would-be buyers and insisted it was not looking for any merger partners.

Chairman Win Bischoff said: "We think we can go forward under independent ownership. People talk to us

and tell us how wonderful our business is, which I suppose is a kind of approach, but we have not had any firm approaches."

Schroders, which is one of Britain's "big four" pension fund managers, announced plans for a share capitalisation issue, aimed at improving marketability of its shares, which will give investors one new ordinary share for each two they already own.

However, Mr Bischoff said there was no prospect of the group's dual-share voting structure coming to an end, which he said Schroders felt comfortable with.

Mr Bischoff also said the Schroder family — whose 40 per cent stake is regarded as

an obstacle to any bidder — was not necessarily a stumbling block to any reform of the shareholder structure.

Of the provisions, £24 million relates to potential bad debts — mainly in Indonesia, Korea and Thailand — although £8 million has also been set aside to cover the cost of restructuring the group's Japanese securities business.

Meanwhile, Mr Bischoff defended the group's pension fund management arm, which earlier this week, along with rivals MAM, Gartmore and PDM — has come under fire for its poor performance last year.

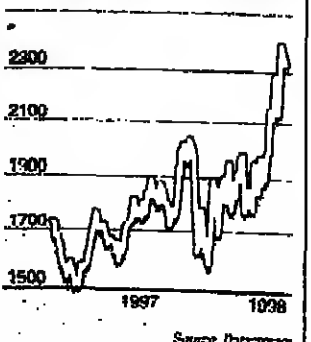
He said: "We have had a disappointing year on our pooled UK pension fund, but to put that in context, it is the first year since 1988 that we have underperformed."

Mr Bischoff also said that, outside the US, Schroders had paid between five and 10 of its employees over £1 million each last year.

● Union Bank of Switzerland yesterday announced losses of SFr129 million (£32.6 million) for 1997, due mainly to

Schroders

Share price, p



restructuring charges following the merger with Swiss Bank, although pre-tax profits — ignoring the restructuring — came in at 3.9 billion Swiss francs (£1.6 billion).

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.39	Germany 2.5002	Malaysia 6.46	Singapore 2.81
Austria 20.58	Greece 40.43	Malta 0.83	South Africa 7.84
Belgium 80.29	Hong Kong 12.34	Netherlands 3.2864	Spain 246.23
Canada 1.259	India 64.74	New Zealand 2.74	Sweden 12.57
Cyprus 0.8529	Ireland 1.1795	Norway 12.17	Switzerland 1.75
Denmark 11.21	Israel 5.88	Portugal 228.10	Turkey 385.300
Finland 8.26	Italy 2.902	Saudi Arabia 8.04	USA 1.6041
France 9.78			

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Now Eddie is the
people's choice

Racing

Mystery surrounds £2m plunge

Chris Hawkins

ACCORDING to David Hood of William Hills the "gamble of the decade" is taking place on the Martin Bosley-trained hurdler Rubrahunish who was backed yesterday from 50-1 to 7-1 for Saturday's Imperial Cup at Sandown.

"Nationwide, I reckon this horse has been backed to win £2m," said Hood. "We've been inundated with people wanting to get on and have had to knock them back. We've laid him at all rates. It's incredible."

It certainly takes some believing as Rubrahunish has won only once over hurdles, as a novice two years ago, and in his two races this season was tailed off at Ascot and eighth of 14 behind Dimes at Wincanton last month although interestingly the form book comment reads "coming to hand".

Bosley, who trains the seven-year-old entire along with a string of a dozen other horses at the Berkshire Downs, is currently golfing in France and apparently knows nothing of the gamble.

Sara, his wife, commented: "He'll be shocked when he sees the papers on the boat tomorrow. He was a jockey for 17 years and never has a bet so the money is definitely not ours."

"The horse is owned by Lone Star Racing, a group of cab drivers, and they're as stunned as I am by the news of this gamble."

"We've only had Rubrahunish for seven weeks. He was trained by James Bennett but the owners thought he would benefit from a change of scenery and sent him to us."

"He finished third in the Italian Derby when Peter Chapple-Hyam trained him and was third in the Welsh Champion Hurdle so he's

been a decent sort in his time although he's had a bit of leg trouble.

"When he came he was very sturdy and when we started to work him he had a good blow but he's very fit now after going up his uphill all-weather six-furlong gallop. I've also ridden him work over a mile on the grass recently and he's done it all very easily."

"It's only myself, my husband and Peter Thompson, our head lad, who have ridden him. We haven't any more staff so it's not as if a stable lad has leaked any information. We're right in the middle of nowhere and nobody sees the gallops so who's started the gamble I don't know."

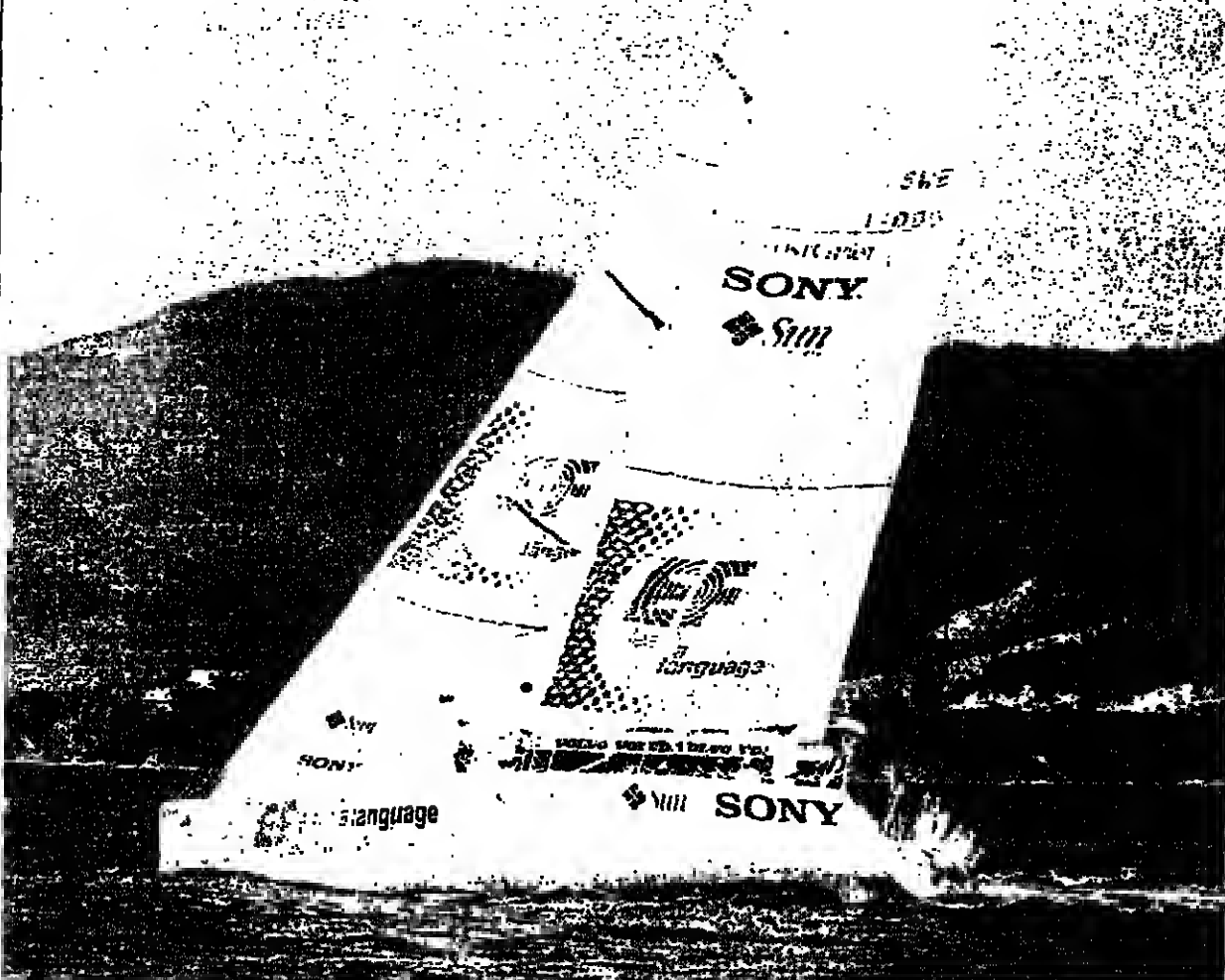
Rubrahunish will be blood tested and scoped today as a precaution to see if he is A.I. Luke Harvey takes the ride. Bosley wanted Carl Llewellyn but he has been booked by Mick Haynes for Kingford Pet.

Charlie Egerton drew some encouragement for his Champion Hurdle hope Shadow Leader after the victory of Bustopher Jones at Southwell and the short-head defeat of Avanti Express at Bangor yesterday.

After a period in the doldrums the stable seems to be finding some form and Egerton reports Shadow Leader, to be ridden by Norman Williams, in good shape although he does not want the ground to be any worse than good to soft for last year's Supreme Novice Hurdle winner.

Shadow Leader is an 8-1 chance with Hills who have established favourites at 3-1 followed by I'm Supposin and Dato Star at 6-1.

Gordon Richards seems to be winning the race against time to get the Grey Monk fit for the Gold Cup and has permission to work his chaser in between races at Ayr tomorrow.



Crest of a wave... the Whitbread race leader EF Language tests sails off Sao Sebastiao before Saturday's restart. MIKE HEWITT

Ainslie still locked on Laser target despite rocking the boat

Bob Fisher in Dubai

BEN AINSLIE continued his attack on the Laser class title here at the ISAF World Championships with two solid performances despite being "yellow-flagged" on the first leg of

the second race. The on-the-water judges ruled that he was guilty of "excessive body kinetics" — rocking the boat to pump the sails — and ordered him to make a 720-degree penalty turn.

Despite that he finished among the leaders in the 65-foot fleet, after coming

third in the morning race behind two of his old rivals, Robert Scheidt of Brazil and New Zealand's Nik Burfoot. Scheidt, the reigning world champion, went on to win his third consecutive race and followed that with an eighth place, but he is still 46 points behind

Ainslie with three races to go.

Shirley Robertson scored a second and a fifth in the women's keelboat class to maintain second place overall. However, in the match racing she lost 3-1 to the United States' Betsy Alison in the quarter-finals.

Carlisle

CHRIS HAWKINS	TONY PALEY
2.00 Vital Issue (m)	Vital Issue (m)
2.30 Hymn M'Peggs (m)	Hymn M'Peggs (m)
3.00 Ashby Lines (m)	Ashby Lines (m)
3.30 Emsayray (m)	Emsayray (m)
4.00 Jumbo Star (m)	Jumbo Star (m)
4.30 Better Times Ahead (m)	Better Times Ahead (m)
5.00 Darts Championship	Darts Championship

Peer-sharp, night-handed track of 1m5 with still 300yds run-in. Going: Heavy, soft in places. Denotes blinkers. Long distance travellers: Even Al Habsed 4.00 D. McLean, Cheshire, 151 miles. Several day winners: 4.30 Darts, 5.00 Darts. Bachelors or Widows: Best Bachelors. Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F, Flat.

2.00 BORDER ESK 'NATIONAL HUNT' NOVICE HURDLE	3m 11yds £2,430 (6 declared)
1. 15305 Border ESK (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15306 Border ESK (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15307 Border ESK (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15308 Border ESK (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15309 Border ESK (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
6. 15310 Border ESK (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

2.30 DERWENT HANDICAP CHASE	2m 27yds (6 declared)
1. 23185 Jack Voss (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 23186 Jack Voss (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 23187 Jack Voss (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 23188 Jack Voss (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 23189 Jack Voss (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
6. 23190 Jack Voss (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

3.00 BOB MILLICAN DIAMOND BIRTHDAY NOVICE HURDLE	2m 41yds £2,528 (5 declared)
1. 15311 Bob Millikan (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15312 Bob Millikan (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15313 Bob Millikan (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15314 Bob Millikan (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15315 Bob Millikan (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

3.30 DUNBURN WOODEN HILL NOVICE CHASE	2m 41yds £2,528 (5 declared)
1. 15316 Dunburn (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15317 Dunburn (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15318 Dunburn (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15319 Dunburn (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15320 Dunburn (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

4.00 WYVER CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE	2m 11yds £2,430 (10 declared)
1. 15321 Wyver (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15322 Wyver (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15323 Wyver (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15324 Wyver (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15325 Wyver (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

4.30 JOHNS PRESIDENT YOUNGERS HANDICAP CHASE	3m 21yds £3,436 (5 declared)
1. 15326 Johns (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15327 Johns (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15328 Johns (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15329 Johns (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15330 Johns (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

5.00 LIDDEL WATER INTERMEDIATE HUNT FLAT RACE	2m 11yds £2,430 (10 declared)
1. 15331 Liddel (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15332 Liddel (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15333 Liddel (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15334 Liddel (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15335 Liddel (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

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TOWCESTER	772 782
CARLISLE	773 783

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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Wincanton Jackpot card with form guide

CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
2.20 Prospectus's Cove	Berlin Hill
2.30 Prospectus's Cove	Berlin Hill
3.20 Prospectus's Cove	Berlin Hill
3.30 Prospectus's Cove	Berlin Hill
4.20 Prospectus's Cove	Berlin Hill
4.30 Prospectus's Cove	Berlin Hill

Right-handed crack of 1m5 with 200yds run-in. Level, galloping course where the going rarely becomes heavy. Going: Good. Denotes blinkers. Long distance travellers: Prospectus's Cove 2.20 and 2.30. Several day winners: 2.20 Darts, 2.30 Darts. Bachelors or Widows: Best Bachelors. Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F, Flat.

2.20 SEAVINGTON MAIDEN HURDLE (Div 1)	2m 11yds £1,800 (10 declared)
1. 15336 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15337 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15338 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15339 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15340 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

2.50 BROADSTONE NOVICE CHASE	2m 11yds £2,528 (5 declared)
1. 15341 Broadstone (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15342 Broadstone (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15343 Broadstone (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15344 Broadstone (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15345 Broadstone (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

3.20 WINCANTON LOGISTICS HANDICAP CHASE	2m 11yds £2,528 (5 declared)
1. 15346 Wincanton (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15347 Wincanton (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15348 Wincanton (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15349 Wincanton (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15350 Wincanton (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

3.50 TOMMY WALLIS HANDICAP HURDLE	2m 11yds £2,430 (7 declared)
1. 15351 Tommy Wallis (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15352 Tommy Wallis (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15353 Tommy Wallis (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15354 Tommy Wallis (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15355 Tommy Wallis (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

4.20 DICK WOODMAN HUNTERS' CHASE	3m 11yds £1,800 (5 declared)
1. 15356 Dick Woodman (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15357 Dick Woodman (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15358 Dick Woodman (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15359 Dick Woodman (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15360 Dick Woodman (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

4.50 SPARKFORD HANDICAP HURDLE	2m 61yds £2,248 (20 declared)
1. 15361 Sparkford (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15362 Sparkford (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15363 Sparkford (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15364 Sparkford (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15365 Sparkford (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

5.20 SEAVINGTON MAIDEN HURDLE (Div 2)	2m 11yds £1,800 (10 declared)
1. 15366 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15367 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15368 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15369 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15370 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

5.50 SEAVINGTON MAIDEN HURDLE (Div 3)	2m 11yds £1,800 (10 declared)
1. 15371 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15372 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15373 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15374 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15375 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

6.00 SEAVINGTON MAIDEN HURDLE (Div 4)	2m 11yds £1,800 (10 declared)
1. 15376 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
2. 15377 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
3. 15378 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
4. 15379 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20
5. 15380 Seavington (m) 5-11-10	A. Public 20

Trainer watch
Horses having their first run for a new trainer today — Carlisle: 2.30 My Man in Durban, 6. Coney to C. Grant; 3.00 Afro Lincs, K. Pendragon to F. Murphy.
Towcester: 3.10 Gwynedd, D. Nicholson to Mrs M. Jones; 4.30 Llewellyn, D. Nicholson to D. Winkler; 4.40 Mediane, M. A. Wilson to Miss C. Gordon.
Wincanton: 2.20 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 2.30 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 2.40 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 2.50 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 3.00 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 3.10 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 3.20 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 3.30 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 3.40 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 3.50 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 4.00 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 4.10 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 4.20 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 4.30 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 4.40 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 4.50 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. England; 5.00 Fares of Carsewell, O. Sherwood to Miss E. 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Premiership

Leeds United 4 Blackburn Rovers 0

Leeds find four-goal form

Ian Ross

LEDS UNITED stood for recent nights to suggest that a campaign of countless disappointments may yet finish with a flourish.

The game was decided in the space of eight second-half minutes as the Yorkshire side dispensed with their customary profligacy to score three times. They added a fourth with a minute to go to complete the rout.

Dependent upon one's perspective, this was either a meeting of the Premiership's also-rans or the bridesmaids who would be bride. The improbable defeat of Leeds by Wolves in the FA Cup on Saturday guaranteed that both those clubs would finish empty-handed a season which was initially alive with expectation.

The suspension of Bruno Ribeiro and Rod Wallace made the Leeds manager George Graham's job simple, for after Saturday's debacle changes in personnel were inevitable if only to appease an increasingly disillusioned local public. Leeds are always hurt by Wallace's absence and last night the temptation simply to knock the ball forward in the hope that Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink would profit was at first only rarely resisted.

The young Australian Harry Kewell, supposedly sharing attacking duties with Hasselbaink, was too often back in midfield trying to dilute the effectiveness of Blackburn's Gary Flitcroft and Tim Sherwood. It was no easy job.

Blackburn's more fluid approach play gave them a distinct edge and during a poor first 20 minutes they created a couple of presentable chances.

Chris Sutton troubled Kewell, having picked up Colin Hendry's dreadfully under-estimated back-pass, could only drive his shot against the bar.

But it was a sign that the tide was turning and, quite incredibly, within 11 minutes of the restart Leeds were



Giving the run-around... Blackburn's England refusenik striker Chris Sutton finds a way past Leeds's new German Martin Hiden

Kewell, having picked up Colin Hendry's dreadfully under-estimated back-pass, could only drive his shot against the bar.

But it was a sign that the tide was turning and, quite incredibly, within 11 minutes of the restart Leeds were

three goals to the good and back on speaking terms with their fans. Bowyer struck first, ramming home an emphatic volley after neatly exchanging the ball with David Wetherall.

Hasselbaink was next up, sweeping in an imperious drive after turning Gary Croft, and Blackburn promptly lost interest. They were pushed to the point of capitulation after 56 minutes when Alf Inge Haaland

hooked a bounding ball over his shoulder and into the top corner of the net. Thereafter Leeds spent much time grazing the frame of the Blackburn goal with a wide variety of shots from a wide variety of angles until

Haaland hammered home a remarkable drive from 35 yards.

Leeds United (4-4-2): Martin; Hiden, Riddle, Wetherall, Harris, Kelly, Bowyer, Hendry, Flitcroft, Sherwood, Wallace, Blackburn Rovers (4-4-2): Flett, Kewell, Hendry, Hendry, Croft, Flitcroft, Sherwood, Wallace, Sherwood, Wallace, Blackburn Rovers (4-4-2): Flett, Kewell, Hendry, Hendry, Croft, Flitcroft, Sherwood, Wallace, Sherwood, Wallace.

Managing director claims to fully support Trevor Francis

Brady plays down 'rift'

KARREN BRADY has watered down her comments about the Birmingham City manager Trevor Francis.

Yesterday she denied there was a rift between herself and Francis and said she fully supported the manager and praised his achievements in taking City towards the First Division play-offs.

Brady, the managing director, said: "It's been put in the media as a battle between me and Trevor, but that is not the case. This so-called power struggle doesn't exist. We both do very important jobs for Birmingham City and both do them well."

"I am glad that Trevor is staying at Birmingham City — as are the rest of the board and I've never done anything but support him."

However, Brady emphasised that Francis was made aware last week of the decision to turn over the players' lounge to sponsors, one of the things which led him to resign after the 1-0 victory over Queens Park Rangers.

She said: "The decision to change was told to Trevor during the week, and the players were moved to a much better area. Before the game on Saturday Trevor was told the players' wives were delighted with their new area. There was no forewarning of Trevor's resignation."

Brady added that an investigation was being carried out into the incident in which Francis's son Matthew was abused by a spectator.

On Tuesday Brady had sounded a different tune, saying: "There is no question that I am the boss. I'm in charge of all day-to-day affairs at Birmingham and I make all the commercial decisions."

"He's in charge of the football side. If he is trying to turn this into a 'me versus him' situation, then there is only one winner: me."

The Birmingham chairman David Gold pledged his and the board's support for Francis as manager. "Karen and Trevor have resolved their differences. Both of them

respect each other's achievements," he claimed.

Crystal Palace are set to renew their interest in the Yugoslavian midfielder Sasa Curcic. The player's £1 million move to Selhurst Park appeared to be dead in the water a few days ago when Palace failed to get a work permit.

But the new Aston Villa manager John Gregory said he expected Palace to make a fresh attempt to try to secure a permit for the man for whom his club paid £4 million 18 months ago.

"I think that Palace are making one more try," said Gregory. Curcic has started only three games for Villa this season and has lost his place in the international team.

Both factors contributed to Palace failing in their initial attempt to secure a work permit. Gregory, who said he was unsure of Curcic's whereabouts, wants to resolve the matter as soon as possible. "It is my job to get it sorted," he said.

Chelsea 6 Crystal Palace 2

Vialli leads from the front

Trevor Haylett

CHELSEA were at one with their player-manager last night as Gianluca Vialli scored twice to lead his team to a first Premiership win after his charge. As a result he may have pushed Terry Venables further away from joining Palace, this emphatic defeat increasing the likelihood of their relegation.

The Stamford Bridge side made up for their recent barren spell with the substitute Tore Andre Flo scoring twice in the final minutes. Palace, who had claimed the first goal, also added a second through Wayne Collins but Dennis Wise had already made it 4-1, and it was embarrassing to see the visitors pulled apart at will.

Cholsoia made six changes after Sunday's defeat by Aston Villa but the one Palace were hoping for themselves, the return of Attilio Lombardo from

lengthy injury, was delayed as he began his comeback on the bench.

Palace looked threadbare and down-at-heel but after six minutes they led. Dmitri Kharike failed to deal with a long throw from the right and, after Neil Emberton saw a shot blocked, the ball fell to Hermann Hreidarsson who smacked it into the far corner.

It was the first Premier-league goal Palace had scored



Vialli... first league win

in open play for 598 minutes but only briefly did it sustain their optimism as within 10 minutes Chelsea twice exposed their faltering back line.

In the 14th minute Gianfranco Zola's corner was attacked by Frank Sinclair and Vialli headed home the loose ball. Soon afterwards Vialli cleverly sent in Zola and enabled his compatriot to make his mark on the scoresheet for the first time since November 26.

Palace continued to attack with some spirit. Emberton wasting a decent opening and Simon Rodger drawing a fine reaction save from Kharike, though it was clear they would need to take every one of their chances. On the stroke of half-time Chelsea extended their lead when the Zola-Vialli combination put the manager in for his second.

Chelsea (4-4-2): Kharike; Sinclair, Lobotkin, Clarke, Oranville, Peasegood, Morris, Wilson, Newton, Zola, Vialli, Emberton, Rodger, Rodger, Dyer, Griffin, Referees M Riley (Leeds).

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Results

Football

FA CUP

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

Rugby Union

Rugby League

Baseball

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Cycling

Cricket

Golf

Horse Racing

Tennis

Winter Sports

Other

Results

Football

FA Cup

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Fourth Division

Non-League

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Football
Fifa gives fillip
to England's
World Cup bid

SPORTS NEWS 15

Forget the drunken Barmy Army of kids and misfits, today's lot is middle class and middle England



Frank Keating

INDIA beat Australia by a walloping 179 runs in Madras. The Australians whinge about the umpiring. So what's new? Nothing much except that it makes a change for an Anglo-Saxon

umpire, in this case England's George Sharp, to be given, as our headline had it yesterday, "the evil eye" by Anglo-Saxon players in a Test on the subcontinent.

This winter marks the 10th anniversary of the presumed abyss in these matters when, on England's 1987-88 tour of Pakistan, Chris Broad refused to walk in Lahore and, in the next Test in Faisalabad, Mike Gatting had his infamous run-in with Shakoor Rana. Since then there have been third umpires, television replays, match referees, an international panel and more handsome recompense for umpires... and yet the job seems if anything more

fraught and thankless, especially with zoom-lensed slow cameras from every angle indiscriminately promiscuous in turn for prosecution and defence.

The really astonishing thing, as we shall see over the next few days in Barbados, is that umpires get it right far more often than not. Poor Sharp has had a particularly awkward baptism. His first Test, England v India at Trent Bridge in 1996, had the visitors seething regularly during a long day's 200-odd stand between Nasser Hussain and Mike Atherton. Last summer in his second Test at Old Trafford he had to adjudicate in a split second on the

"catch" from Greg Blewett which Hussain at slip scooped (or didn't) off the turf. Replays couldn't prove him wrong, but the decision rankled and festered with the Australians — perhaps till Madras this week.

Sharp certainly looks the part: solid, unfazed, straight-gazed. In "real life" he is a son of the soil, a director of GSB Loans, which supplies turf for sports fields. He was Northamptonshire's hardy perennial stumper for 18 summers (caught 565, stumped 90, batting average 20). Wicketkeepers make for good umpires — schooled in unwavering concentration (and patience) in the very can-

non's mouth. On the first-class list of late have been sub-staunch glovemen as Barry Meyer, Ray Julian and David Evans, and before them were sub-stalwarts of the lore as, offhand, Fred Price, Harry Elliott, Faddy Corral and possibly the most judicious index-fingered arbitrator of all, Syd Buller.

Buller was Worcestershire's pre-war wicketkeeper (caught 178, stumped 71) whose playing career was cut short in 1939 when he was seriously injured in a car crash during a match against Essex at Chelmsford in which his team-mate Charles Bull was killed. Sharp was luckier (though probably just as trau-

matised) in 1989 when, as a county tyro of 19, he was a passenger in his Geordie com-patriot's Austin 1800 the night Colin Milburn drove into a lorry at Moulton. Milburn lost his eye, his glorious cricketing cut off at a stroke, but Sharp was unscathed.

Can it really be just a fortnight till the eighth anniversary of Milburn's sudden death at 48 in a pub car-park in Durham? Be sure that Ollie's name will crop up by the hour in Barbados these next few days, and rum punches will be raised to his utter grandeur, however unfulfilled. Whenever on the happy island, which was as often as he could, Milburn was truly

loved as one of their own. The tragic hero of Falaftan was performance one of the first (and certainly the most popular) ex-player travel couriers, a pioneer of the phenomenon which has, to all intents, England beginning a "home" Test today.

Forget the tiny, over-desperate and usually drunken Barmy Army of ragged UK kids and misfits; today's lot in Bridgetown is middle class and middle-aged and middle England. The players and press refer to them with disparaging semi-affection as Winks — and the Winks celebrate their 20th anniversary this winter.

Par Gibson of the Daily Express, who sits on the balcony of Sydney's Chateau Commodore Hotel with Peter Smith of the Mail and Terry Brindle of the Yorkshire Post, looked down at a horde of Brits arriving for next day's SCG Test. "Travel firm Wankers Incorporated?" suggested Pat. At once, Winks it was: one old MCC had hobbled from the bus on a cane. "Look, a Wink on a stick!" another unsteadily duty freed "a tidily Wink": one sunburned from the Colombo stop-over ("a pinkie Winkie") and so on. See them in Barbados today, winter white and blinking in the sun. Or, rather, winking.

Cricket

West Indies v England: fifth Test

Moment of truth for sullen skip

Mike Selvey in Bridgetown says that Michael Atherton's captaincy is at stake

ANYONE, journalist or punter, who approached Allan Border before he led Australia into a Test match ran the risk of multiple lacerations from a tongue like a razor. They called him Captain Grumpy but understood that it was just AB cranking himself up for a big effort.

England's own Captain Grumpy was also in one of his enigmatic and monosyllabic moods before team practice yesterday morning but, like

is so much bigger a game than four years ago, and it will be a test of the team to see if they can play to their maximum when they need to.

At least seven and probably eight of the side who played in that game will be named in this morning's team. England gambled heavily in the fourth Test at Bourda and lost. This time, on a pitch which promises to be the best of the series, there will be no tinkering with the strategy of attrition which was abandoned in Guyana.

It means that the batting line-up will remain the same. Jack Russell will continue to keep wicket and Andy Caddick will return in place of one of the two spinners.

The option of having Stewart take over the gloves in order to play an extra bowler — or batsman — is the great talking point among the 10,000-odd supporters who have flooded the island. But the subject would have been given very short shrift at the selection meeting last night.

"He has been the one great strength we have had with the bat," said Atherton. "To have scored the runs he has done under the circumstances is a fine performance and we would not want to weaken that. Nor has he kept wicket for a while."

There would have been trepidation about batting Robert Croft at seven. Although there is a case for his off-spin — West Indies' inclusion of Clayton Lambert brings four left-handers into their top six — Phil Tufnell's attritional skills were a key factor here last time and are likely to be so again.

Barbados lost a high-scoring match to Guyana on this pitch a couple of weeks ago, when Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Lambert and Phil Wallace also recruited to the side here — scored centuries. That strip turned on the first day, as previous Test pitches have, but that is a function of dampness and, when it burns off, the surface flattens.



Glove affair... Jack Russell will not be shaded by Alec Stewart behind the stumps

PHOTOGRAPH BY CLIVE MASON

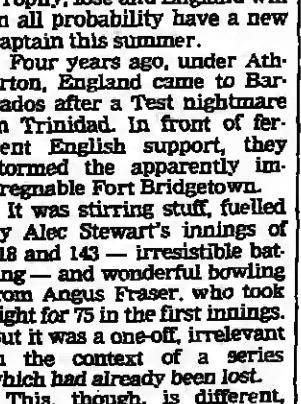
Rather Bridgetown helps the seamers, particularly early on. As a result, captains tend to put the opposition in — 10 times in the past 11 matches — although the success rate, three wins against seven defeats, hardly justifies the strategy. Atherton will want to bat first and weather the storm as

he and Stewart did last time, when they shared an opening stand of 171.

With Brian Lara in charge, there is no telling these days, quite what West Indies will do, but they seem certain to revert to the old battering-ram of four fast bowlers, with Dinanath Ramnarine's leg-

spin relegated to the bench. But the changes to the batting line-up, particularly the addition of Lambert, a 28-year-old who played one Test seven years ago and was not chosen again, show a lack of faith in their run-scoring ability despite their overwhelming win at Bourda.

There is such doubt that there was talk yesterday of Jimmy Adams becoming wicketkeeper, in view of David Williams' indifferent form with gloves and bat, and of Roland Holder entering the fray. That would be a case not just of belt and braces but of bicycle-chips as well.



Paul Weaver in Port Elizabeth on a breakdown in discipline

Partying Pakistanis may be sent packing

TWO Pakistan players face disciplinary action for late-night drinking and partying in South Africa. But Shoaib Akhtar and Fazle-Akbar, who may be sent home, yesterday flew with the rest of the tour party from Johannesburg to Bulawayo for a two-Test series against Zimbabwe.

On arrival at the team hotel last night the coach Haroon Rashid said: "We will decide what action to take in the next day or two, but sending them home is certainly an option."

The captain Rashid Latif said: "I've told the players enough is enough. I want total commitment and if that is lacking there is no shortage of talent back home. We have to set an example at some time or else Pakistan cricket is never going to be the disciplined force it could be."

Latif, whose side were heavily beaten by South Africa in the third and last Test here at St George's Park to level the series 1-1, has also spoken to some senior players about ignoring an 11pm team curfew. It is possible that Shoaib and Fazl, both young players, have been made scapegoats for a complete breakdown of discipline within the party.

"If the off-field behaviour is going to affect the performances on the field, I don't want such players in my team," Latif said. This is not the first time Shoaib has been in trouble.

Despite his notable success on the Pakistan A tour to England last year he did not go to Canada for the Sahara Cup game against India. He is regarded by many as the fastest bowler in Test cricket and stunned South Africa with a five-wicket first-innings return in Durban to set up victory in the second Test earlier this month.

Fazl arrived in South Africa as a replacement for Mohammad Akram, who with Saqlain Mushtaq was injured after allegedly visiting a Johannesburg night-spot.

The Test at Wanderers was delayed for a day after both players claimed they had been mugged. However, they have been unable to provide a plausible explanation of how and when the mugging took place and could not give a description of their attackers.

The South Africa police are still waiting for sworn statements and a former bouncer has claimed he saw the players in a club on the night of the alleged mugging.

Badminton

Morgan beaten by top seed after being left home alone

Richard Jago in Birmingham

KELLY MORGAN, the only British player to reach the third round of the women's singles at the Yonex All England Championships, was knocked out by the top seed Gong Zhichao at the National Indoor Arena here yesterday.

The 22-year-old from Cardiff attacked boldly and led 6-5 in the second game but the Chinese player's defensive skill proved decisive and she won 11-3, 11-7.

Earlier Morgan, whose fitness and confidence have improved greatly in the past year since lottery funding enabled her to return from a two-year exile in Denmark and France, beat Malaysia's Law Pei Pei 11-0, 11-4.

Darren Hall, the best home hope in the men's singles, lost 15-11, 15-1 to the swift Malaysian left-hander Wong Choong Han.

Golf

Ballesteros finds rhythm but Africans take curtain-raiser

Gordon Richardson in Agadir

SEVERIANO Ballesteros was a losing captain yesterday as his eight-man European team were defeated 3-1 in the Sahara Cup by an African side led by Zimbabwe's Tony Johnstone in the curtain-raiser to the Moroccan Open, which starts today.

The Spaniard was, however, in upbeat mood after a sprightly start to the season — ninth and 10th in Dubai and Qatar — which he continues to attribute to swimming's effect on his back. "I'm doing aerobics and stretching exercises but it's the back crawl that is making the difference."

He returned a one-under-par 71 with his compatriot Miguel Angel Jimenez as they lost by two to Johnstone and the South African Roger Wessels.

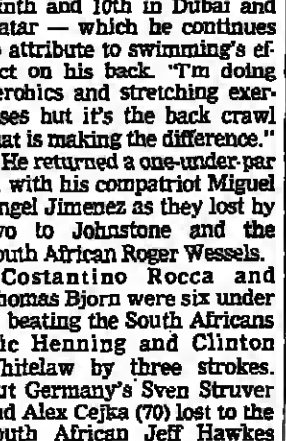
Costantino Rocca and Thomas Bjorn were six under in beating the South Africans Nic Henning and Clinton Whitelaw by three strokes. But Germany's Sven Struwer and Alex Cejka (70) lost to the South African Jeff Hawkes

Golf

Ballesteros finds rhythm but Africans take curtain-raiser

and Morocco's Younes El Hassani (68), and Raymond Russell and the Swede Robert Karlsson (68) lost by three to Wayne Westner, the South African playing with borrowed clubs, and the Moroccan Mohamed Makroum.

Russell contracted hepatitis A in Thailand and is on antibiotics for 10 days, only liquids for five, and no alcohol or dairy products until June. The Scot will be hoping for better things today inside King Hassan's pink-walled palace grounds.



Ballesteros... buoyant

Rugby Union

More than just a wing

Ieuan Evans will play no more for Wales. Robert Armstrong pays his respects

IEUAN EVANS'S retirement from the Wales team, announced in Cardiff yesterday, has put the increasingly tawdry world of rugby politics in its proper perspective, reminding everyone that the game depends on the players and not administrators to sell itself to the public.

Evans, 34 next week, has another 14 months on his contract with Bath, whom he joined from Llanelli last summer, but after 11 seasons in the service of Wales and the Lions, with whom he enjoyed three highly productive tours, he has taken the tough decision to step down. One of the most prolific Test wings of the century, this modest man from Pontardulais will be an impossible act to follow.

"There comes a time when, logic, not emotion, dictates your future plans," he said yesterday. "International rugby has had a massive influence on my life but there comes a time

when your body and mind cry enough is enough." Wings do not come much better than Evans, who not only scored 33 tries in a Welsh-record 72 Test appearances but also set an impeccable example as a modern sporting hero.

An intelligent analyst of the game blessed with blistering pace and a deceptive side-step, a razor-sharp tackler and committed team man, captain of Wales in a record 28 internationals, Evans added to his impressive list of honours with a triumphant appearance in the European Cup final against Brive less than six weeks ago.

His brilliance as a Test finisher is more impressive for the fact that his career coincided with a calamitous decline in Wales's fortunes which forced their three-quarters to live off meagre rations.

Among the many vital tries he scored, two stand out. He left David Campese with eggs all over his features when he scored the try that clinched the Test series for the 1989 Lions to Australia, and against England in 1993 he left Rory Underwood for dead with a long-range try that earned Wales a 10-9 victory.

Premiership: Gloucester 22 Wasps 15

The Shed goes into gloat mode

Paul Rees

THE Gloucester faithful taunted Wasps with chants of "You're going down" after the centre Richard Tombs waltzed through an indifferent tackling to ensure victory over the champions at Kingsholm.

It was just as well for the Shed because their promised warm reception for Lawrence Dallaglio had not been needed after the Exeter captain withdrew because of a neck injury.

He was well out of it as Wasps found themselves 10 points down in as many minutes after their early spell of pressure was broken when the Gloucester scrum-half Scott Benton broke away from his own 25 in a move which gained 60 yards. Mark Mapletoft gave Gloucester the lead with a penalty before Benton again exposed uncertainty in the Wasps defence. His chip to the corner was run into touch and from the line-out, the home forwards drove the lock Rob Fidler over the line.

Gloucester's eye for the counter-attack overloaded the Wasps defence, but they somehow managed to hang on for the rest of the half through a combination of the home side's over-elaboration and poor handling and some inspired defence.

Wasps scored their first points just before the interval when Gareth Rees kicked a penalty.

After the interval Wasps produced their best move of the match, a flowing sequence which started near their own line and resulted in a try for the No 8 Peter Scriven.

But, in a match riddled with knock-ons, petty infringements and whistle, Tombs then popped up with the decisive try.

Wasps were awarded a rash of penalties at the end and laboriously fashioned a try for the replacement Mike Friday.

SCORERS: Gloucester: Try: Fidler, Johnson, Tombs. Gloucestershire: Mapletoft, Paddy, Mapletoft, Wasps: Try: Scriven, Scriven. Gloucester: Rees. Wasps: Rees. Gloucester: Rees, Johnson, Fidler, Tombs, St. André, Mapletoft, Benton, Wood, Forster, Venter, Piller, Gwilliams, (capt), Oponoh, Semini, Carter, Devenish, Sampson, (Flyhalf) N-11, Greenwood, Scaras, Henderson, Rolser, Rees, Gomersall (capt), Denny, 67, Molloy, Leone (Michael), 71, Green, Woodcock, Snow, Walton (Dorothy), 71, Jones. Referee: S. Preece (Yorkshire)

Clubs will be loyal to union under charter, Hall says

SIR JOHN HALL insisted yesterday that England's Premiership clubs will remain in the Rugby Football Union despite their plan to secure independent negotiating rights with television and major sponsors, writes Robert Armstrong.

The Newcastle chairman acknowledged the RFU's continuing role as the regulatory body after unveiling a clubs charter which stipulates that players must be contracted to clubs only and not the RFU. "There will be no break-away," said Sir John, who confirmed that the clubs would take the RFU to court.

One of the charter's more controversial proposals is to stage Five Nations matches towards the end of the season.

Cliff Brittle, chairman of the RFU management board, said he was disappointed that Donald Kerr, chairman of English First Division Rugby, had rejected a new offer from European Rugby Clubs Limited designed to entice English clubs to take part in European competition over the next four seasons.

"The union reiterates its desire for the clubs to participate in the European Cup and allow Bath to defend its title next season," Brittle said. Meanwhile, Sir John is contemplating a move to a larger ground. "We have outgrown Kingston Park and must look at what we're doing from grass-roots level upwards."

Racing gamble of the decade, page 13
Win or bust for Atherton, page 15

England get World Cup boost, page 14
Evans says farewell to Wales, page 15

SportsGuardian

Premiership

West Ham United 1, Manchester United 1

Scholes goal makes point

David Lacey

A WELL-TAKEN goal by Paul Scholes steadied Manchester United last night after a weakened West Ham team had taken an early lead and dominated much of the first hour. Scholes equalised in the 66th minute, leaving West Ham to rue their missed chances.

Upton Park became the graveyard of Manchester United's championship hopes in 1992 and 1995 but last night found them content to dig in for a draw if necessary. Three points beckoned, nevertheless. West Ham have lost only one league match at home this season, but they were without the suspended John Hartson, their leading scorer, and the past three games at Upton Park had been drawn. They were still awaiting their first victory over United in the Premiership, although the way Harry Redknapp's side began last night suggested the wait might soon be over.

Even with Ryan Giggs, Gary Pallister, Ronny Johnsen and Phil Neville unit, Alex Ferguson was able to put out a durable-looking team. But with David Beckham, Nicky Butt and Brian McClair tending to tuck in behind the strikers and Scholes, West Ham found space on the flanks from the outset. Twice in the opening four minutes May rescued United's defence, intercepting a dangerous low cross from Andy Dwyer and clearing a shot from Sami Alou off the goal-line after Peter Schmeichel had failed to hold Frank Lampard's drive. But the redemption was brief. In the sixth minute United

were again exposed at the back, this time by a pass from Rio Ferdinand that found Rivaldo in space less than 12 yards from goal. The Israeli decided, wrongly, to dribble the ball into the net and the chance seemed to have been wasted but, after Berkovic had been blocked by Teddy Sheringham, Trevor Sinclair drove the rebound past Schmeichel.

They were still awaiting their first victory over United in the Premiership, although the way Harry Redknapp's side began last night suggested the wait might soon be over.

Midway through the first half it was Lampard's turn to exploit the opposition's lack of cover on the right flank. A simple pass inside Denis Irwin found Sinclair breaking clear and had there been a West Ham presence at the far post another goal would surely have followed after a low centre had beaten Schmeichel. Certainly West Ham should have been further ahead by half-time, given the number of times United gave the ball away deep in their own half. Berkovic's reluctance to shoot and Alou's poor control after he had nutmegged May spared Ferguson's off-colour team further discomfort, and when a cross from Lomas

dipped toward the top far corner of the net Schmeichel managed to flick the ball to safety.

Manchester United's most encouraging moment of the half came in the 43rd minute, when Cole outpaced Ferdinand through the middle and seemed likely to score until determined pressure from Steve Potts forced him to shoot wide. A minute later, at the other end, Lampard gathered a pass from Lomas before producing a stunning 20-yard shot that Schmeichel touched on to the near post.

For the second half Ferguson replaced McClair with Ben Thornley and had Scholes playing deeper, ostensibly to pick up Lampard's runs. Paradoxically almost, Scholes wasted no time creating a scoring chance for himself, playing one-two with Sheringham and Cole before shooting wide.

The night, however, still did not favour Manchester United. A challenge on Schmeichel that saw Sinclair cautioned left the United goalkeeper with a limp and almost simultaneously Butt hobbled off to be replaced by John Curtis.

Then a glimmer of hope for Manchester United. Five minutes past the hour, as West Ham's defence retreated, Sheringham exchanged passes with Beckham before finding the perfect pass to send Scholes through the middle. Scholes was almost dispossessed but deftly controlled a rebound off an outstretched leg before beating Lomas with a rising shot.

West Ham United (3-4-1-2): Lacey, Potts, Ferdinand, Pearce, Impey, Lampard, Lomas, Lazaridis, Berkovic, Alou, Sinclair, Manchester United (4-3-1-2): Schmeichel, G. Neville, May, Borg, Irwin, Beckham, Butt, McClair, (Thornley, H-J), Scholes, Sheringham, Cole. Referee: G. Willard (Worthing).



United v United... Trevor Sinclair arrives too late to stop Denis Irwin from making a clearance

PHOTOGRAPH: ROSS KINNARD

Aston Villa 0 Barnsley 1

Ward strike tightens Tykes' grip

Peter White

BARNSLEY considerably enhanced their chances of Premier-

ship survival with a hard-earned victory at Villa Park last night.

A goal from Ashley Ward after 17 minutes against the run of play took Barnsley to within two points of the two clubs above them in the table - Tottenham and Everton. The Yorkshire side also have a game in hand on both those teams.

Villa were looking to maintain their 100 per cent league record since the appointment of John Gregory as manager after impressive victories at home to Liverpool and away to Chelsea. Gregory maintained before kick-off that seven points from Villa's remaining nine games would ensure Premiership football next season.

Barnsley's position was far more acute, even though their recent improved form had lifted them off the foot of the

table. They went into last night's match having conceded 40 goals in 14 games on their travels. Their manager Danny Wilson was intent on staunching the flow by operating a five-man defence as well as three midfield men for further strength.

As a result Villa had the majority of play in the opening half, but they were made to pay for some slack defensive play in the 17th minute when the visitors snatched the lead after a quick counter-attack.

There seemed no sign of a Barnsley goal in the opening spell as Villa pushed forward dominantly. The home side had a chance to lead in the 11th minute, when Steve Staunton provided a deep cross from the left which Dwight Yorke headed back inside.

Both Ian Taylor and Jan Joachim appeared to be in scoring positions, but Yorke's headed pass somehow eluded both and rolled away for a goal-kick.

Barnsley seemed content to defend in numbers, but when the opportunity arose to break quickly they did so with enormous effect. Neil Redfern fed Martin Bullock, who threaded a pass through Villa's spread-eagled defence for Martin Ward to chase.

Ward, a £1 million signing from Derby County this season, darted unchallenged into the penalty area before beating Mark Bosnich with a chipped shot which the keeper got a hand to but could not prevent from crossing the line.

Barnsley returned to their defensive play, frustrating Villa, who might have equalised when Lee Hendrie took a return pass from Alan Wright, only to

see his rising shot beaten away by Watson.

Before the interval, Mark Draper and Ugo Ehiogu had further chances to put the home side level, but both saw long-range efforts edge just wide of Watson's goal.

Villa had chances, but lacked the penetration to produce the equaliser. Yorke set up Hendrie, whose first-time volley bounced high into the air for Watson to clutch just under his bar.

Grayson, seconds before he left the field, sent over a cross from the right which Yorke laid back in the path of Alan Wright, but the full-back's 20-yard shot was too high.

Aston Villa (3-4-2-1): Bosnich; Ehiogu, Southgate, Staunton, Grayson; (Byfield, Wilson) Taylor, Draper, Hendrie, Wright, Nelson; 90: Joachim, Yorke.

Barnsley (5-3-2): Watson, Eaden, Morgan, Moses, Jones, Barnard, (Tinker 88); Bullock, Redfern, Sheward, Florin; Liddell 60; Ward.

Referee: J. Jones (Loughborough).

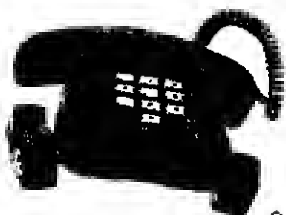
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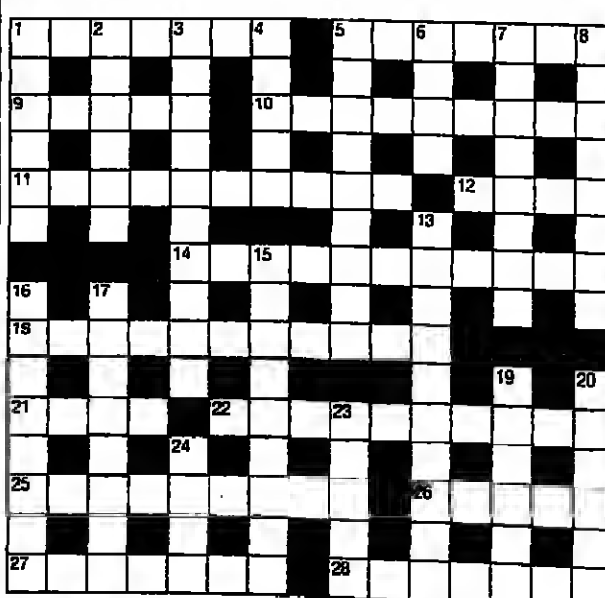
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A whirlwind romance — lovely phrase, so twirly, you can almost see the crinolines swooshing as the couple lose their hearts to each other, waltzing to the Blue Danube.
Louisa Young falls in love with love

G2 p4

Guardian Crossword No 21,220

Set by Janus

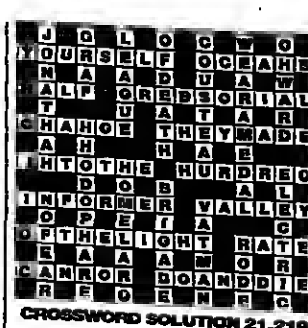


Across

- 1 Stroke caused by delayed excretion (4,3)
- 5 Decline to run because not up to it? (7)
- 9 Italian type? (5)
- 10 Soldier under compulsion to study actor's text (9)
- 11 Wild tale needing fair share of correction (10)
- 12 Part of church some chaps enjoy (4)
- 14 Freely offered services in Everton duel? (11)
- 18 No mere torch it also tells the time (11)
- 21 Part of registrar we hear (4)
- 22 Rush around in old car with lawless Australian (10)
- 25 Flash of insight during lesson? (9)
- 26 Mary take it to be the same (5)

Down

- 1 Cowboy often has one during winding trail (8)
- 2 Tries to entice casual worker to lead saint astray (5)
- 3 Oppose having art form to assemble outside (10)
- 4 It is understood historian has lost American support (5)
- 5 Daily maid with model hat (3,6)
- 6 Musical sweetmeat (4)
- 7 Tourists seeing murderer in back street (8)
- 8 Flash people had those peculiarities (8)
- 13 Put up with possible danger from turbulent assembly (4,6)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,219

- 15 Row about one sumo wrestler in car (9)
- 16 In a hurry to prepare Southern dishes (8)
- 17 Churchmen having second thoughts about counselling service (8)
- 19 She conceals weapon in fancy hat (6)
- 20 Do they go straight when taken in hand by bishops? (8)
- 23 Workmen from north and south (5)
- 24 Queen of idleness it seems (4)

Solution tomorrow

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Now the B...
that could

Inside